


Gudrun



WITHDRAWN



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Das buch ist von Chaurun



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Eerlamdt.
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künig her.
gehayssen
was er Ger
sem dritter
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vol erkant. dienten vil der Burge.
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ynne hettir seelen. Viertausent oder
oder mere. damit Er täglich mocht
te erwerben baide gut vnd ere. Den
surgen Ingebände man gen hofe ge
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venden kame daz er bester bas mocht
te gemessen. Er wuchs ontz andie
stunde. daz Er waffen trug. in heldet
athte erkunde alles des gering. des
In solten preysen man vnd magt.

GUDRUN

A Mediaeval Epic

TRANSLATED FROM THE

Middle High German

by

MARY PICKERING NICHOLS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK

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Preface.

THE epic poem of Gu-drun is one of the most important early literary works of the German race. It is attributed to the latter part of the twelfth or the beginning of the thirteenth century, and to a date a little subsequent to that of the Nibelungen Lied. It was first brought to the notice of the modern world in the year 1817, the only original manuscript now known to exist having been discovered about that time in the castle Ambras in the Tyrol, among other manuscripts which had been collected by the Emperor Maximilian I. (1493–1519). The manuscript is now in the Imperial Library at Vienna. It has been several times edited and printed in the original Middle High German, with critical annotations; various translations into modern German have also been published: but so far as I can learn, no complete metrical version in the English language has been made public.

The name of the author is unknown; it is generally thought to have been constructed, in great measure, from earlier legends which had been repeated by wandering singers. According to the late Karl Bartsch, the distinguished critic and editor of Mediæval German literature, the tale

shows affinity to legends of the Scalds of Norway and Denmark, and to those of the Shetland Isles. Traces of resemblance are said to be found among the relics of Anglo-Saxon literature. The supposition that the poem was constructed from various early legends explains some of the marvellous incidents of the tale, and those chronological inconsistencies where the rude habits and ideas of earlier times are combined with the later knightly usages of the Middle Ages and with Christian belief.

The scene of the poem is laid principally on the shores of the North Sea, and includes Ireland and Normandy, as well as Holland, Denmark, and Friesland. Very vague ideas of geography were, however, entertained by the poet. Some names of places are thought to be fabulous, and critics disagree with regard to the modern countries designated by other names used.

The poem is founded upon the themes of love and war, and properly consists of three parts. The first portion, embracing four tales, relates the adventures of Hagen, the grandfather of Gu-drun; the second part gives the story of the wooing and abduction of Hilda, his daughter, the mother of Gu-drun. The proper story of Gu-drun begins only with the ninth tale.

The narrative gives a vivid picture of the ideas, manners, and customs of the age of the author; of the dwellings, dress, and ornaments in use; of the weapons and warfare; of the ships and sea-life; and of the tournaments and court

festivities. From it we see the nature of the intellectual amusement enjoyed by the northern nations, at that period of their mental development when literary entertainment in the modern sense was yet unknown, and its place was supplied by listening to the recitals of wandering bards.

Modern German critics agree in assigning a high literary value to the poem of Gu-drun, and compare it not unfavorably with the Nibelungen Lied. Bartsch, the critic above named, says: "The general impression which the poem gives is one of greater beauty, though not always of equal grandeur with that of the Nibelungen; it is a worthy companion-piece. The two are justly compared, as are the Iliad and the Odyssey. In the Nibelungen as in the Iliad the fate of a whole people is decided by the sword, and the ruling house, consisting of noble heroes, meets destruction before our eyes; but the conquerors do not fully rejoice in their success. The whole breathes a tragic spirit, even more than the Greek epic. '*Nach Freude Leid*' — 'after joy comes sorrow' — is the earnest tone throughout. Gu-drun, like the Odyssey, closes more tenderly and in a spirit of reconciliation. Although pitiless fate has destroyed the happiness of those for whom the poet has awakened our sympathy, and we see a noble being suffer in the most shameful manner, yet we are sustained by hope, and a happy end compensates for woes endured. '*Aus Leid Freude*' — 'sorrows end in joy' — is the final conclusion. . . . All the characters are worked out in the most

minute and careful manner, and are developed consistently. . . . The best traits of the German nature, fearless bravery, unfaltering fidelity, and unswerving integrity, are presented. The nobility of a feminine soul which, inspired by pure love, in the distress of a hard captivity, preserves its fidelity to its beloved, perhaps in no poem of the German middle ages is so strikingly shown as in the character of Gu-drun. . . . The descriptions both of battle and scenery are masterly, and are painted with a few decisive strokes."

The metrical form of Gu-drun is similar to that of the Nibelungen. In both, the accentuation is determined by the logical sense, as in prose, and not always by the number of syllables, as in most modern verse. In both, the lines are metrically divided, giving three accents to each half-line of the stanza, except in the fourth line, in which Gu-drun differs from the Nibelungen in having five accents instead of four on the concluding half-line.

The translator has adhered to the original rhythm, and has endeavored in each stanza to convey strictly the ideas of the author, being careful not to introduce anything, in thought or simile, foreign to the poem, and, as far as the verse would permit, to give a verbal rendering.

The translation has been made from Bartsch's edition of the original Middle High German (Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1874). He, like the other editors, has supplied some omissions in the manuscript, an instance of which may

be seen in the sixth line of the fac-simile given. The drawings introduced are copied from mediæval German printed books.

I wish to acknowledge my obligation to my brother for careful revision and for many important improvements throughout the translation.

BOSTON, 1889.

M. P. N.

Contents.

TALE I. Sigeband, king of Ireland, after the death of his father, marries a princess of Norway, who bears him a son, Hagen. During the celebration of a court festival, Hagen, now seven years old, while outside the castle in the care of his attendants, is caught up by a griffin, and borne to his nest in a distant land. Stanzas 1-66.

TALE II. Hagen, falling from the grasp of one of the young griffins, crawls into a cave, where he finds three young daughters of kings, who had also been carried off by the griffins. He grows up in their company. At last, one day, he wanders with them to the seashore, where he finds a ship whose master, a lord from Karadie, he persuades to rescue them from their exile. 67-113.

TALE III. The master of the ship inquires of Hagen and the maidens concerning their country, and learns that Hagen is the son of an old enemy. He threatens to keep him as a hostage, but Hagen seizes thirty of the sailors, and flings them into the sea, and compels the others to steer towards his home. There, he sends messengers to announce his arrival to his father and mother, who come down to the shore to meet him. 114-150.

TALE IV. Hagen reconciles his father to the men who had brought him home, and receives from his father the government of the kingdom. He marries one of the three maidens, Hilda, from India. She gives birth to a daughter, likewise named Hilda. When she is grown up, her many suitors are rejected by her father. 151-203.

TALE V. Hettel, king of the Hegelings, a suitor for Hilda, summons his vassals, Wâ-te, Horant, and Fru-te, and sends them to obtain her for his wife. They go, purporting to be merchants, carrying seven hundred warriors concealed in the hold of the ship. They send rich gifts to Hagen, and at the request of his daughter, Hilda, they are kindly received at court. 204-371.

TALE VI. Horant delights the court with his singing, and he with his friend Morunc are introduced to the bower of Hilda. He tells her of Hettel's suit, which she, charmed by the singing of Horant, re-

ceives with favor. They invite her to visit their ship, with her father and mother, and the invitation is accepted. 372-439.

TALE VII. Hilda, with her father and mother and her maidens, rides down to the shore; she and the maidens go on board the ship. While Hagen's attention is occupied, the vessel sets sail, and they arrive in Hettel's land. 440-486.

TALE VIII. Hagen and his warriors follow in their ships, in order to rescue Hilda, and reach the Hegeling land: a battle takes place on the seashore. At Hilda's entreaty, peace is made, and Hagen consents to her marriage with Hettel. Hagen returns home, leaving Hilda and her maidens in Hettel's kingdom. 487-562.

TALE IX. Wâ-te, Horant, and the other vassals of Hettel go back to their homes. Hilda bears to Hettel a son, Ortwin, and a daughter, Gu-drun, who is afterwards sought by Siegfried, king of Moorland. He is rejected by her father, Hettel, and retires in anger. 563-586.

TALE X. Hartmut, a Norman prince, son of Ludwig and Gerlind, hears of the beauty of Gu-drun, and resolves to woo her. Messengers are dispatched with letters, but receive a forbidding answer. 587-616.

TALE XI. Herwic, king of Sealand, sends suitors for the hand of Gu-drun, who are also rejected. Hartmut of Normandy comes to woo her in person, and is kindly received by her; she, however, begs him, if he values his life, to leave the court. He returns to Normandy, resolved to win her by force. 617-629.

TALE XII. Herwic, being forbidden by Hettel to woo his daughter, invades his kingdom, and, after a battle, Gu-drun, with Hettel's consent, is betrothed to him. 630-667.

TALE XIII. Siegfried, a rival suitor for Gu-drun, invades the land of Herwic, who sends to Hettel for his assistance: Hettel with many of his vassals comes to his help. Siegfried is driven into a castle, and there besieged. 668-724.

TALE XIV. Hettel sends to announce to Hilda, his wife, and to Gu-drun, his daughter, his success in the fight with Siegfried. Hartmut, the Norman, takes advantage of the absence of both Hettel and Herwic, and invades the Hegeling kingdom. 725-752.

TALE XV. Hartmut sends messengers again to Gu-drun to ask her hand, and threatens to take her by force if she still rejects his suit. She answers that she is betrothed to Herwic, and refuses him. Hartmut and Ludwig bring an army and capture the Hegeling castle, and carry away Gu-drun with her hand-maidens. 753-809.

- TALE XVI. Hettel and Herwic, being informed of their losses by Hilda, make peace with Siegfried, and release him on condition that he will unite with them in war against Hartmut. They take possession of the ships of a pilgrim band, and pursue Hartmut. 810-846.
- TALE XVII. Ludwig and Hartmut, on their way to Normandy with Gu-drun, stop at a desert island, called Wulpensand; Hettel and Herwic, in pursuit, reach the island, and a battle ensues. 847-879.
- TALE XVIII. Ludwig, king of the Normans, slays Hettel, and his army steals away with the maidens in the night. The Hegelings discover their departure, bury the dead, and erect a hospital and cloister in their memory. 880-918.
- TALE XIX. The Hegelings return, and announce to Queen Hilda the death of her husband and their ill-success. They decide to wait till the young knights become old enough for war, and then to make a second campaign against the Normans. 919-950.
- TALE XX. The Normans reach their land with Gu-drun and her maidens; she refuses to marry Hartmut, and is placed in the care of Gerlind, his mother, who treats her harshly and obliges her to perform menial service. Ortrun, the sister of Hartmut, shows kindness to Gu-drun. 951-1040.
- TALE XXI. Gu-drun receives better treatment, but, still refusing to marry Hartmut, she is sent to wash clothes on the seashore. Hildeburg, one of her maidens, obtains permission to share her labors, which are continued through many years. 1041-1070.
- TALE XXII. Hilda summons her vassals to make an expedition against the Normans. After visiting the graves of their kinsmen on the Wulpensand, they pass in safety the magnetic rocks at Givers, and arrive on the coast of Normandy. 1071-1141.
- TALE XXIII. Herwic and Ortwin, the brother of Gu-drun, agree to go forward in advance to procure intelligence in regard to her and her maidens. 1142-1164.
- TALE XXIV. While Gu-drun and Hildeburg are washing on the seashore, a swan announces to them the approach of Queen Hilda's army for their rescue, and tells them that two knights will come the next morning to inform them still further of this. 1165-1206.
- TALE XXV. Herwig and Ortwin, coming in a boat, see the maidens washing on the shore, recognize them, and make themselves known. Thinking it dishonorable to take the maids away without winning them in fight, the knights return to bring their army. The maidens

go back to Gerlind, and, feeling sure of her speedy rescue, Gu-drun pretends to agree to Hartmut's suit, and is restored to favor. 1207-1334.

TALE XXVI. On their return to their friends, Herwic and Ortwin make known the result of their search. The Hegeling army arrives before the Norman castle, and is discovered by Ludwig and Hartmut. 1335-1365.

TALE XXVII. Hartmut names to Ludwig the banners of the coming knights. On learning that the Hegeling army is approaching, Gerlind counsels her son, Hartmut, to await a siege; but he chooses to sally forth, with Ludwig and their followers, and a battle ensues, in which Ludwig overthrows Herwic. 1366-1440.

TALE XXVIII. Herwic, feeling mortified that Gu-drun from the castle should see his fall, returns to the fight, and slays Ludwig. Gerlind bribes one of her men to put Gu-drun to death, but he is prevented by the threats of Hartmut. Hartmut is taken prisoner, and carried on board a ship. 1441-1493.

TALE XXIX. The Hegelings obtain possession of the castle, and spare neither old nor young. Ortrun seeks refuge with Gu-drun, and Gerlind also implores her protection, but she is recognized and killed by Wâ-te. The Hegeling army devastate the land: Hartmut and Ortrun are held captive. 1494-1560.

TALE XXX. The Hegeling army returns home, bringing Gu-drun and her maidens, with the Norman captives. Hilda welcomes the returning ships, and embraces her daughter, whom she does not at first recognize, after her long absence. By Gu-drun's request, Hilda is reconciled to Hartmut and Ortrun, and Ortwin takes Ortrun for his bride. Hartmut and his men are set free, on their promise not to escape, and Hartmut agrees to wed Hildeburg. Herwic's sister is sent for, and betrothed to Siegfried. 1561-1666.

TALE XXXI. A great wedding festival is held, at which the four kings, Herwic, Ortwin, Hartmut, and Siegfried, try to surpass each other in generous giving. Hartmut with his bride, Hildeburg, leaves for Normandy. 1667-1695.

TALE XXXII. Siegfried, king of Moorland, goes home, taking his bride, Herwic's sister. Herwic returns to his home with Gu-drun, after she has bidden farewell to her mother, Hilda, and to her brother, Ortwin, and Ortrun, his wife. 1696-1705.

Names of Persons.

GER, — an early king of Ireland, grandfather of Hagen.

U-TE, — wife of Ger.

SIGEBAND, — son of Ger and U-te.

U-TE, — a Norwegian princess, wife of Sigeband.

HAGEN, — son of Sigeband and the second U-te, and grandfather of Gu-drun.

HILDA, — a princess of India, wife of Hagen.

HILDA, — daughter of Hagen, wife of Hettel.

HETTEL, — king of the Hegelings, husband of Hilda, and father of Gu-drun and Ortwin.

GU-DRUN, — daughter of Hettel and Hilda.

ORTWIN, — prince of Ortland, son of Hettel and Hilda.

WA-TE,

FRU-TE,

HORANT,

MORUNG,

IROLD,

} vassals of Hettel.

LUDWIG, — king of Normandy.

GERLIND, — wife of Ludwig.

HARTMUT, — son of Ludwig and Gerlind, a suitor for Gu-drun.

ORTRUN, — daughter of Ludwig and Gerlind.

SIEGFRIED, — king of Moorland, a suitor for Gu-drun.

HERWIC, — king of Sealand, betrothed to Gu-drun.

HILDEBURG, }
HERGART, } maiden companions of Gu-drun.

Names of Places.

- ARAKIE, — an imaginary Eastern land, subject to Siegfried.
- ABALIE, — an Eastern land, noted for gems and cloths.
- ALZABIE, — a fabulous Moorland city, the residence of Siegfried.
- AMILE, — an imaginary Eastern land, the home of mermaids.
- ARABY, — a land whence came fine clothes and treasures.
- BALLIAN — Ballyghan, Hagen's chief city in Ireland.
- DANELAND, — not the present Denmark, but, in the ninth century, the seat of the Danes in Friesland, near the mouth of the Scheldt.
- DIETMARSCH, — a province subject to Hettel.
- FRIESLAND, — subject to Hettel, and held in fief by Morunc and Irold.
- GALEIS, — a land whose people are friendly to Herwic.
- GALICIA, — Portugal, the home of Hildeburg.
- GARADIE, — an indeterminate country, near Ireland.
- GIVERS, — a fabulous land, subject to Horant.
- GULSTRED, — a place in the West.
- HEGELING, — the name of a people on the North Sea, in Holland, governed by Hettel.
- HOLSTEIN, — variously mentioned as subject to Fru-te, to Irold, and to Ortwin.
- ICARIA, — a fabulous land whose people are allies of Siegfried of Moorland.
- IRELAND, — The situation seems sometimes to correspond with the modern Ireland, and sometimes to a part of Holland. There is a place in Texel, at the present day, named Eijerland.
- ISERLAND, — the home of one of Gu-drun's maiden companions.
- KAMPALIA, — a fabulous land noted for rich clothing.
- KAMPATILLE, — Hettel's castle, also called Matelan.
- KARADIE, — a land belonging to Siegfried of Moorland.
- KASSIAN, — the chief city and castle of Normandy.
- MATELAN, — see Kampatille.
- MOORLAND, — the kingdom of Siegfried ; owing to the love of the marvelous in antiquity, regarded by the poet as the land of the Moors, but probably a low country near the North Sea.

NIFLAND, — “the land of fogs,” on the lower Rhine, the home of the Nibelungen.

NORMANDY or ORMANIE, — may be the country now known as Normandy, or is perhaps a region near the mouth of the Scheldt, where the name Ormans-kapelle occurs in an ancient map.

ORTLAND, — probably Jutland, under the rule of Ortwin.

SALME, — a fabulous country.

SEALAND, — Herwic’s kingdom, not the Danish Zealand, but probably the sea-lands of Friesland.

SCOTLAND, — spoken of as belonging to Norway.

STURMLAND, — subject to Wâ-te, adjoining Herwic’s kingdom.

WALEIS, — the western limit of Hettel’s kingdom, by some supposed to be Wales, but generally thought to be the country near the mouth of the river Waal in Holland.

WULPENSAND, — an island at the mouth of the Scheldt.



Tale the First.

HOW HAGEN WAS CARRIED OFF BY THE GRIFFIN.

IN olden days in Ireland a king to greatness came
Who bore the name of Sigeband ; Ger was his father's name.
Queen U-te was his mother ; she of a king was daughter ;
High was her worth and goodness, and well her love beseemed
the lord who sought her.

The sway of Ger was mighty, as unto all is known ;
He many lands and castles and lordships seven did own :
Four thousand knights or over he thence was often leading,
And wealth, and name yet greater, he daily won, with those
who did his bidding.

Now the youthful Sigeband to his father's court must go,
That he might there be learning all he had need to know, —
To bear the spear in riding, to thrust it, and to shield him,
That when he met the foeman, the better fame thereby
the fight would yield him.

That age he now was reaching when he the sword might bear ;
Of all that a knight befitteth he learned a goodly share.
This from kin and vassals praise unmeasured brought him ;
For this he still was striving, and of the toil it cost he
ne'er bethought him.

A few short days thereafter death came among them all,
As even to men the greatest sadly doth befall.
In every land and kingdom the truth of this we're meeting,
And we, with heavy sorrow, such news ourselves must every day
be waiting.

Sigeband's mother, U-te, the widow's seat must take ;
Her son, so high and worthy, left all things for her sake.
No whit he cared for wedlock, and had no heart for wooing ;
Many a queenly lady at this was sad, young Sigeband's
sorrow ruing.

A worthy wife to find him his mother him besought ;
So might he and his kingdom to greater name be brought ;
And he with all his kindred, after their bitter sorrow
For the death of the king, his father, might for themselves
no little gladness borrow.

The teaching of his mother he heard in kindly mood,
And began at once to follow, as that of a friend one should.
The best of high-born maidens, 'mong those in Norway dwelling,
He bade his men to sue for : to help in this he found
his kinsmen willing.

She soon to him was wedded, as hath of old been said.
With her, among her followers, came many a lovely maid,
And, from over Scotland's border, seven hundred warriors fully ;
They came with her right gladly, when the worth of the king
was known to them more truly.

Proudly their way they wended, as beseemed the maiden's birth ;
With all the care they led her befitting his kingly worth ;
Hidden were the roadways by gazers without number,
Who hasted to behold her ; for three miles and a half the
throng the ways did cumber.

Where'er along the roadside the path with green was spread,
Flowers and grass were trampled, by crowds, with heavy tread.
It fell upon that season when the leaves are springing,
And in every copse and thicket all the birds their best
of songs are singing.

Of simple folk and merry there rode with her enough ;
While many loaded horses bore much costly stuff,
Brought there from her birthland by followers of the maiden ;
They came with her by thousands, with gold as well as
clothing heavy-laden.

On the shore of two wide marches, the dwellers by the sea,
As they saw the west wind waft her, gave her welcome free ;
They found a seemly lodging for the lovely, well-born lady,
And brought her all things needful, by the youthful king,
before, for her made ready.

The fair young maid they welcomed with knightly tournament ;
Not soon their games they ended, when on the spear-fight bent.
To the land of Ger his father they bore her to be wedded ;
She there was loved and mighty, and men to sound her name
she never needed.

All, as they were able, waited on the maid ;
The gaudy cloth for her saddle down to the grass was spread ;
The horses' hoofs were hidden by the housing, heavy drooping.
Aha ! In mood how gleeful was Ireland's lord, once more
a blessing hoping !

When now the time was fitting that he the maid should kiss,
All crowded thick about him, in haste to see their bliss.
The bosses of their bucklers were now heard loudly clashing,
Struck with blows together ; each strove to shun the throngs,
in uproar crashing.

Now with the dawn of morning, they sent out, far and wide,
To give to all the tidings of the coming of the bride,
And that, with their master, they ere long would crown her.
His queen she was thereafter, and well she earned from him
the honor shown her.

It was not deemed becoming that he his love should plight,
Since she by birth was queenly, and he not yet a knight :
He first, before his lieges, must the crown be wearing ;
To this his kinsmen helped him, and later of his worth
were all men hearing.

He, with knights five hundred, then was dubbed with the sword ;
Whatever they could wish for was given them at his word, —
Both shields, and, for their wearing, every kind of clothing.
The youthful king so dauntless, thro' life, of fame and honor
wanted nothing.

For many a day thereafter his sway did Ireland bless,
And never did his greatness at any time grow less.
To all he freely listened ; the poor man's wrongs he righted ;
Widely known was his goodness ; no truer knight than he
his word e'er plighted.

His boundless acres yielded a full and ready gain ;
His wife was known for wisdom, and worthy to be his queen.
To hold her as their mistress full thirty lords it booted ;
As long as the sway she wielded, her hand to each his lands
and home allotted.

She bore unto her husband, within the next three years,
A child to see most comely ; (such is the tale one hears.)
When later he was christened, and they were told to name him,
They gave the name of Hagen ; and never since, the tale
of his life doth shame him.

He had most careful breeding, and kindly was he nursed ;
Should he be like his fathers, he would of knights be first.
Watched over by wise women, and by maidens of early age,
His father and fond mother found in his face their glad
eyes' pasturage.

When now the boy, well fostered, to his seventh year was bred,
'T was seen that he by warriors by the hand was often led.
He was happy in men's teaching, but was with women wearied ;
All this he knew no longer ; for, torn from them, he far away
was carried.

Whene'er to him it happened weapons at court to see,
He understood them readily, and their wearer longed to be ;
The helmet and ringed armor would he have put on gladly :
Alas ! not long he saw them, and all his hopes of fighting
ended sadly.

While the kingly Sigeband, beneath a cedar-tree,
One day on the turf was seated, the queen said earnestly :
" Although good name and riches we share with one another,
At one thing yet I wonder, and this from you I dare to hide
no further."

He asked of her : " What is it ? " Then said his helpmeet kind :
" It me doth sorely worry in body and in mind,
And my heart, alas ! is heavy ; to my wish you give no heeding,
To see you 'midst your vassals, my beaming eyes with pride
upon you feeding."

The king to her thus answered : " How should it ever be
That you have had such longing me with my knights to see ?
I will strive thy will to follow, of this think not so sadly ;
Ever to meet thy wishes, both care and toil will I give
myself most gladly."

She said : “ You now for warriors must send throughout the land ;
Stores of wealth and clothing must be given with open hand.
I too will send out heralds my kinsmen all to rally,
And to show them my good wishes ; we then shall find our life
to pass more gaily.”

At this the king of Ireland unto his wife thus said :
“ I yield to you most willingly, for men are often led
By the wishes of fair women great feastings to make ready ;
I therefore now will gather my brave and hardy kinsmen,
and those too of my lady.”

To him the queen then answered : “ Sorrow no more I wear ;
Five hundred women’s garments I will give, to each her share ;
To four and sixty maidens gay clothes to give I’m willing.”
Then the king did tell her high times he soon would hold,
his word fulfilling.

The sports were then bespoken : he bade his men to send,
In eighteen days or sooner, to liegeman and to friend,
To say to all in Ireland, who would in his games be riding,
That, after summer was ended, they should spend the winter,
with him abiding.

He bade his men make benches, so our tale doth run,
And for these, from out the wilderness, timber must be drawn ;
For sixty thousand warriors seats must they make ready.
His henchmen and deft stewards, to do this work for the king,
were skilled and speedy.

Thither men then hastened on many a winding way ;
All were kindly cared for throughout their lengthened stay.
Now from Ireland's kingdom, as the king had bidden,
Full six and eighty thousand of warriors strong there
to his court had ridden.

From the store-rooms of the castle clothing now was borne,—
All the gear they wished for, and all that could be worn.
Shields were also given, and steeds of Irish breeding ;
The proud and queenly lady bedecked her guests with all
they could be needing.

She gave to a thousand women costly clothes enow,
And likewise to fair maidens what one to youth should allow,—
Brodered bands and jewels, and silk that glistened brightly ;
The many lovely ladies, together standing there, were fair
and sightly.

To every one who wished it were given clothes well-made.
Horses were there seen prancing, by the hand of foot-boys led ;
These light shields did carry, and their spears were seizing.
U-te, the queenly mother, was gladly seen, as she on the leads
sat gazing.

The guests by the king were bidden freely in tilts to meet ;
The glitter of their helmets grew dim in the dust and heat.
The ladies, held in honor, near by were also seated,
Where they the deeds of the warriors saw full well, and with
words of wonder greeted.

As oft before has happened, the show had lasted long ;
The king was not unwilling to be looked on by the throng.
This, meanwhile, to his lady happiness was giving,
As she, amidst her women, sat on the roof, and saw their
earnest striving.

When now her lord had ridden, as doth beseem a king,
He thought to end their onsets ; some rest to them to bring
He deemed not unbecoming ; to stop the games he bade them.
And then before the ladies, after their skill thus shown, he
proudly led them.

U-te, the high-born lady, began her friends to greet,
With those from far-off kingdoms ; them as guests to meet
The queen was truly willing ; on them her glad eyes rested.
The gifts of Lady U-te were not on scornful friends
that evening wasted.

Knights and lovely ladies together there were seen.
The good-will of the master to all well-known had been ;
In all their games and tilting, his kindness was not hidden.
Once more the guests, that evening, to ride in warlike strife
by him were bidden.

Their games and sports had lasted until nine days were gone ;
They, as knights befitteth, their skill to the king had shown.
By the many wandering players the show was liked the better,
And they plied their work more briskly, and hoped that their
reward would be the greater.

Sackbuts loud and trumpets there might all men hear ;
Fluting too and harping fell upon the ear.
Some on the rote were playing, others in song were vying ;
They, by their jigs and fifing, soon would better clothes
for themselves be buying.

On the tenth morn it happened, (now hark to my sorry tale,)
That, after all their pastimes, there rose a bitter wail.
About these days so merry new tales were told on the morrow ;
And tho' they now were mirthful, they came to know deep gloom
and heavy sorrow.

When the guests were seated beside their kingly host,
There came to them a player, and proudly made his boast
That he, before all others, (who should indeed believe him ?)
Was far more skilled in playing, and even the greatest lords
their ear must give him.

Outside, a lovely maiden was leading by the hand
The little son of Sigeband who swayed the Irish land ;
With him were likewise women who to the boy gave heeding,
And friendly kinsmen also, who carefully taught the child,
and oversaw his breeding.

Within the great king's palace was heard a din and shout ;
All were there heard laughing, the roomy walls throughout.
The guardians of young Hagen crowded up too nearly,
And thus lost sight of the maiden, together with the child
they loved so dearly.

The evil luck of their master to him that day drew near,
And brought to him and U-te sudden woe and fear.
Sent by the wicked devil, from afar his herald hasted
To them in their happy kingdom ; they were by this with
sorrow sorely wasted.

It was a strong, wild griffin had quickly thither flown ;
From the little boy of Sigeband, who ever care had known,
Came ill luck to his father, who soon of this was tasting.
His son, so well-belovéd, to him was lost, with the mighty
bird far hasting.

A shadow now came o'er them, from wings that bore him fleet,
As if a cloud had risen ; great strength had the bird, I weet.
The guests, in pastime busy, no thought to this had given,
And the maid, with the child she was leading, was standing
now alone, unheeded even.

Beneath the weight of the griffin forest trees broke down ;
And now the trusty maiden looked where the bird had flown ;
Then she herself sought shelter, and left the child forsaken.
Hearing a tale so startling, one truly might the whole
for a wonder reckon.

The griffin soon alighted, and in his claws he held
The little child, gripped tightly, while with fear it quailed.
His ghastly mood and anger the bird was harshly showing ;
This must knights and kinsmen long bewail, with sorrow
ever growing.

The boy was sorely frightened, and began aloud to shriek ;
Higher the mighty griffin flew, with outstretched beak ;
To the clouds above them floating he his prey was bearing.
Siegeband, lord of Ireland, loudly wept, his outcries never
sparing.

His friends and all his kinsmen the sorry tale soon heard ;
They, in the death of his offspring, his bitter sorrow shared.
Downcast were he and his lady, and all their loss felt nearly ;
Sorely they wept together, mourning the boy, now torn
from them so early.

In this their mood so gloomy, the happy, merry plays
Must now be sadly ended. Before their frightened gaze,
The griffin so had robbed them that all for home now started,
Sober, and filled with sadness. They truly felt forlorn,
and heavy-hearted.

The king was bitterly weeping, his breast with tears was wet ;
The high-born queen besought him his sorrows to forget,
Thus wisely to him speaking : “ Should all in death be stricken,
There must be an end of all things ; it is the will of God
their lives hath taken.”

Now all would hence be faring, but the queen to them did say :
“ I beg you, knights and warriors, longer with us to stay ;
Our gifts of gold and silver, that here for you are ready,
You should not think of meanly ; our love for you is ever
true and steady.”

The knights to her bowed lowly, and then began they all
To say how they were thankful. The king, thereon, did call
For silken stuffs, the richest, for all who there yet tarried ;
They had ne'er been cut nor opened ; and from far-off lands had
erst to the king been carried.

He gave them also horses, both palfreys and war-steeds ;
The horses out of Ireland were tall and of hardy breeds.
Red gold was likewise given, and silver without weighing ;
The king with care had bidden outfit good for his guests,
no longer staying.

Soon as the queen was willing, each her leave now takes,
Both lovely maids and women ; each one herself bedecks
With gifts that made her fairer ; all new clothes are wearing.
The high times now are ended ; Sigeband's land they leave,
and are homeward faring.





Tale the Second.

HOW HAGEN SLEW THE GRIFFIN.

OF how their stay was ended I will speak no longer here ;
Now I tell you further of the rushing flight in the air,
That the child with the angry griffin far away was bearing.
For this his friends and kinsmen long in their hearts were
heavy sorrow wearing.

Because the Lord so willed it the child was not yet dead ;
But, none the less, he later a life of sadness led,
After the harsh old griffin back to his nestlings bore him.
When on their prey they gloated, hard toil enough the boy
had now before him.

Soon as the bird that bore him did on his nest alight,
He dropped the boy he carried, and in his claws held tight ;
One of the young ones caught him : that he did not devour him
Thanks to God thereafter were given, far and wide, for the
watch kept o'er him.

Else the birds had slain him, and with their claws had torn.
Now listen all with wonder, and his bitter sorrow learn :
Hear how the king of Ireland then from death was shielded ;
Him a young bird now carried, strongly clutched, and naught
of his grip he yielded.

From tree to tree in the forest he with the boy took flight ;
The bird a little too boldly trusted his strength and might.
Upon a branch he lighted, but now to the ground must flutter,
For he was much too heavy ; in the nest to have longer staid
had methinks been better.

The child, while the bird was falling, broke from him away,
And hid among the bushes, a little, lorn estray ;
Well-nigh was he to starving, 't was long since food he tasted.
Yet on a day long after the hopes of women in Ireland
on him rested.

God doth many a wonder, truly one may say.
By the craft of the mighty griffin, it came to pass one day,
Three daughters fair of princes had been taken thither,
And now near by were dwelling. No man can tell how there
they lived together,

And how, thro' days so many, their lives to them were spared,
Were it not that God in heaven for them in kindness cared.
Hagen now no longer need live without a fellow ;
Those good and lovely maidens soon found the little waif
in a rocky hollow.

When, crawling to his hiding, they the child did see,
It might, so thought the maidens, a dwarfish goblin be,
Or perhaps it was a water-oaf, from out the sea up-driven ;
But when the boy came near them, at once a welcome kind
to him was given.

Hagen was ware of the maidens, as into their cave they stole,
While with fear and sadness their little hearts were full,
Before they yet had knowledge that they a Christian greeted.
But the care they later showed him lifted the pain from
many hearts o'erweighted.

First spake the eldest maiden : "How darest thou in our cave,
Where from the God of heaven we home and shelter have ?
Go, seek again thy playmates, the billowy waters under ;
Enough ourselves we sorrow, and on our bitter lot in sadness
ponder."

The high-born child then answered : "I pray you let me stay ;
I truly am a Christian, you must not say me nay.
One of the griffins seized me, and to the cave did carry ;
I cannot live all lonely, and here with you would I
most gladly tarry."

Then to the child so friendless they loving welcome gave ;
But they of his worth thereafter did better knowledge have.
They now could ask him only, whence he had been stolen ;
But, such was then his hunger, in telling his tale, his heart
was full and swollen.

Then spake the little foundling : “ Food I sorely need ;
Give to me, in kindness, a little drink and bread.
’T is long since I have had it, and now three days I ’m fasting,
The while the griffin bore me, and full a hundred miles
was hither hasting.”

Then answered one of the maidens : “ Our lot it so hath been,
That we our wonted cup-bearers never here have seen ;
Neither our lordly steward, who should food to us be giving.”
Still they praised God’s goodness ; altho’ their years were few,
they were wisely living.

A search they soon were making for roots and herbage wild,
Wherewith they hoped to strengthen Sigeband’s darling child.
Such food as they had lived on they gave to him most freely ;
To him ’t was a meal unwonted, but such as they long time
had eaten daily.

Yet he needs must eat it, for hunger sore he hath,
And hard it is to any to meet with bitter death.
Thro’ all the days so dreary, while with the maidens dwelling,
To them his help most willing he ever gave, his thankfulness
thus telling.

They, too, had him in keeping, that can I say for truth ;
He there grew up in sadness, throughout his early youth ;
Until, one day, the children, to make them greatly sorrow,
Before their cavern-dwelling saw wonders rise, that
threatened more to-morrow.

With these himself he girded, that simple little child ;
When in the air above him he heard a rushing wild.
He wished that he had loitered, the sorry little master ;
But quickly came the griffin ; to the sheltering cavern fain
would he flee the faster.

The bird swung down in anger to the sandy beach and foam ;
The little playmate and fellow of the young it left at home,
Would by the angry griffin have at once been swallowed ;
But now the bold young Hagen the ways of a daring foeman
bravely followed.

He with strength but youthful the tightened string drew out,
And arrows swift and many from the well-bent bow he shot.
Alas ! he did not hit him ; what hope of his ill-luck turning ?
Then he of the sword bethought him ; he heard the maids
bewailing him and mourning.

Tho' his years were not yet many, he still was brave enough ;
A wing from the angry griffin he struck at the shoulder off,
And in the leg he smote him a heavier blow and stronger ;
So that his wounded body the bird away from the spot
could drag no longer.

The boy was now the winner ; one of his foes lay dead ;
But quickly came another, who sorrow for him made.
All at last were slaughtered ; nor old nor young were living ;
God in heaven helped him ; but truly against such strength
't were hopeless striving.

When he that feat of wonder had done, with heart so brave,
He called the friendly maidens from out their rocky cave.
He said : " Let air and sunshine your sorry hearts be filling ;
Since now the God in heaven to grant to us some bliss
at last is willing."

His call they kindly welcomed, and many times, forsooth,
The boy by the lovely maidens was kissed upon the mouth.
Their keeper now lay lifeless ; and none there was to hinder
Their roaming o'er the hillsides, and, far or near, at their
good-will to wander.

By help of the boy, from sorrow they now were wholly free ;
The little childish wanderer, so skilled with the bow was he,
That birds his well-shot arrows could never shun by flying.
He shot them now for pastime ; but to get them soon for food
must he be trying.

He in heart was daring, he was mild, but also brave ;
Hey ! from the wild beasts learning, what nimble leaps he gave !
As doth the strong young panther, over the rocks he scrambled ;
Himself was his only teacher, and, far away from kin, alone
he rambled.

While on the shore, by the waters, his time he often spent,
He saw, among the sea-waves, live fishes, as he went ;
To catch them it were easy, but yet he did not get them,
For with fire his kitchen smoked not. Daily his sorrow grew
that he could not eat them.

Oft from his rocky shelter to the forest he would roam ;
Many wild beasts saw he, strong and grim in their home.
One there was among them greedy to devour him ;
But with his sword he slew him, and let him quickly feel
the hate he bore him.

Unto a wild chameleon this dreadful thing was like ;
Its skin the boy drew from it, (for that was he not too weak ;)
Now for its blood he thirsted, and, when of this he had taken,
He felt great strength come o'er him ; and many thoughts began
in him to waken.

Then with the skin of the monster he wrapped himself around ;
When soon to him it happened hard by a lion he found.
To shun him it were hopeless, for he quickly rushed upon him ;
But the boy was yet unwounded ; his foe from the daring child
warm welcome won him.

When he the lion had smitten to death, with many blows,
He to the cave would take it, as homeward thence he goes.
At all times had the maidens been by his care upholden,
But now this food unwonted did raise their waning strength,
and their hearts embolden.

Of fire they yet knew nothing, but wood they need not seek ;
From out a stone he quickly many sparks did strike.
The food they long had wanted he soon was on them bestowing,
And, since there was none to do it, themselves the flesh must cook
on the coals now glowing.

When they of food had eaten, at once they grew more strong ;
Their boldness, too, grew greater, (to God their thanks belong.)
And now their bodies also as healthy were, and comely,
As if they still were living, each in her father-land,
on fare more homely.

The wild young Hagen also the strength of twelve did own ;
And for this, thro' all his lifetime, praise by him was won.
But both to him and the maidens 't was pain and sorrow only,
To think that they forever must pass their lives in a waste
so sad and lonely.

They begged of him to lead them down to the watery flood.
Shame they felt in going, for the clothes were none too good
The maidens now were wearing ; they themselves had sewed them,
Ere yet the youthful Hagen them in their banishment found,
and his kindness showed them.

For days full four and twenty they fared thro' the piny wood ;
At last, on a morning early, down they came to the flood,
And saw a laden galley, that came from Garadé.
Then did the lonely maidens sorrow and pain at the sailors'
plight betray.

Hagen shouted loudly ; he was hindered none the more,
Altho' the winds were boisterous, and wild the waves did roar.
Now the ship was groaning ; and the sailors, landward steering,
Felt dread of water-nixes, on seeing the maids, as they
the shore were nearing.

The ship it had a master, a lord from out Salmé;
Hagen, as well as his kindred, had he known on a former day.
They before were neighbors, but Ireland's child, here roaming,
The youthful son of Sigeband, was to the pilgrims unknown,
who now were coming.

The earl forbade his steersman nearer to sail to the shore;
But now the childish outcast but begged of them the more,
For love of God, to take them away from that shore forsaken.
The sailors felt emboldened, when by the boy the name
of Christ was taken.

The earl, with eleven others, into a boat now sprung;
Ere he the truth was learning, the time to him seemed long.
Whether the maidens as goblins or mermaids must be treated
He knew not; such beings never, in all his life before,
his eyes had greeted.

He first began to ask them, before he reached the strand:
"Boy, have you been baptized? What do you in this land?"
Dight with fresh green mosses he saw those lovely daughters,
Who earnestly begged the sailors that they would deign
to take them o'er the waters.





Tale the Third.

HOW HAGEN SAILED TO HIS HOME.

BEFORE they went on shipboard, the pilgrims them besought
Kindly to take the clothing they with them had brought.
However shy were the maidens, to wear them they were ready ;
They donned the clothes with blushes, and now their sorrow
had an ending speedy.

Soon as the lovely maidens embarked upon the wave,
They heartily were greeted by knights both good and brave,
Who to the high-born daughters welcome to give were heedful ;
Tho' they at first mistook them, and thought them wicked elves,
or mermaids dreadful.

That night the maidens rested with friends upon the sea ;
So wondrous was their dwelling, from fear they were not free :
Wiser it were in the children to think this home a blessing.
Soon as the earl had bidden, their food upon the maids
they all were pressing.

After they had eaten, and while with them he sat,
The lord of the land of Garadie the maidens did entreat
To say by whom such fair ones were brought unto that shore.
The children, at his asking, only felt their sorrow grow
the more.

First answered him the eldest of those who with him sat :
“ I come from a far-off kingdom, (my lord, now hear my fate ;)
I was born in the land of India, a land wherein my father
Was king while he was living, but I, alas ! the crown
must leave to another.”

Then spake the maid next younger : “ I too have come from far ;
Erewhile a strong old griffin did me from Portugal bear.
A king in the land was my father ; none than he was prouder,
Nor for a mighty ruler, far or near, were ever
praises louder.”

Then the youngest maiden, who by the earl sat near,
To him spoke low and modestly, and said : “ I pray you hear ;
From Iserland I was carried, my father there held power ;
But from those who hoped to rear me, alas ! afar was I borne
in an evil hour.”

The high-born knight then answered : “ By God ’t is ordered well,
Since you among your kinsfolk not long were left to dwell ;
Now, at last, by his kindness you are freed from dangers,
For I within these borders have found you living here,
such lovely strangers.”

However much he asked them, they yet to tell were loath,
How unto them it happened grim death had spared them both,
When erewhiles the griffin unto his nest had brought them.
Many had been their sorrows ; no more to speak of these
the maids bethought them.

Then said the worthy leader, turning to the youth ;
“ My dearest friend and fellow, now let me hear the truth ;
Since unto me these maidens their sorry tale have given,
From you would I hear gladly, and learn the land and kin
whence you were riven.”

To him wild Hagen answered : “ That will I tell to you ;
One of those dreadful griffins bore me hither too.
Sigeband was my father ; in Ireland once was I living ;
But long with these lovely maidens I since have dwelt,
with many sorrows striving.”

Then they all besought him to say how it befell
That, living with the griffins he had come off so well.
To them young Hagen answered : “ To God it all was owing ;
But now I have cooled my anger ; no more for them my heart
with hate is glowing.”

Then spake the lord of Garadie : “ I fain would learn from you
How you were freed from danger ? ” He said : “ I quickly slew
Both the old and the young ones ; not one of those is living
By whom my life was threatened, and who to me such fear
were daily giving.”

Then said all the sailors: "Your strength indeed was great;
For every man and woman to praise you it were meet.
A thousand of us truly 'gainst them in vain had striven,
Nor ever could have slain them; truly to you have blessings
great been given."

The earl and all his followers were of the boy afraid;
His strength was past all measure, and sorrow for them made.
They would by craft his weapons have taken from him gladly,
But these he sternly guarded, and soon, thro' him, it ended
for them sadly.

Then spake the earl yet further: "It now has happened well,
After our toilsome wanderings, and all that us befell.
But since you are a kinsman of my foeman, Sigeband,
And here have come from Ireland, I as a hostage hold you
in my hand.

"You come to me most fitly, as you shall know ere long,
For many of your kindred have done to me great wrong.
In Garadie's fair kingdom, which lies too near their border,
In a heavy fight, my warriors were seized upon and murdered
by their shameful order."

Then answered him young Hagen: "Of all the wrongs they did
I am wholly guiltless; if me to them you lead
I their hearts will soften, and so will the strife be ended.
Let hope to me be granted that I on my kinsmen's shore
may soon be landed."

Then said the earl to Hagen : “ For a pledge must you abide,
And I shall keep these maidens to live at court by my side ;
They will swell my greatness, and I shall be their owner.”
Then thought the youthful Hagen, such words to be to him
a wrong and a dishonor.

He quickly said in anger : “ No bondsman will I be ;
That may no man ask for, who would unscathed go free.
And now, my worthy sailors, you needs to my land must bear me ;
I will reward you gladly, and to give you clothes and gold
will never spare me.

“ The earl has thought my maidens his own shall ever be ;
But they shall yet be happy, and shall of him be free.
Whoe’er is blest with wisdom, let him my bidding follow ;
Look to your sails, and turn them, and guide the ship
to Ireland, o’er the billow.”

The men, as the earl had bidden, to seize the boy now dared,
But boldly did he meet them, and for their lives they feared.
He by the hair caught thirty, and into the water flung them ;
Soon the strength of his body was known to all, and dreaded
much among them.

Had not the kindly maidens sought to end the fight,
Soon the earl of Garadie he would have killed outright.
’Gainst neither low nor mighty did his anger falter ;
These warriors and sailors now to Ireland’s shores
their way must alter.

They began at once to hasten, lest he their lives might take ;
For now the wrath of Hagen made them with fear to quake.
For seventeen days the sailors from toiling never rested,
And sorely were they frightened ; whene'er he seemed unkind
they ills forecasted.

When he now drew nearer unto his father's shore,
He saw the roomy castles he well had known before ;
Soon a lofty palace he spied at the edge of the river ;
Three hundred towers fully he there beheld, as strong
and good as ever.

In it dwelt King Sigeband, with his proud and queenly wife.
Again each pilgrim sailor thought to lose his life ;
For should the lord of Ireland aught of them be learning,
They feared that he would slay them ; but Hagen stood between,
his anger turning.

Then spake unto the pilgrims that brave and warlike man :
“Your peace will I make gladly, altho' I do not reign ;
I hold no sway in the kingdom, but thither will I be sending,
And 'twixt yourself and my father of the hatred old I soon
will make an ending.

“Would any now be doing what wealth to him will bring,
Let him my errand carry. Whoever to the king
Shall say what I shall bid him, gold will I give him truly ;
And also, very gladly, my father and my mother will reward
him duly.”

Twelve of the stranded pilgrims he bade to ride away :
“ Now ask of the king, my father,” thus the youth did say,
“ Whether to see young Hagen, his son, he still is yearning, —
Him who erst by the griffin was stolen far away, heart-sorrow
learning.

“ I know that what you tell him the king will not believe ;
Then ask you of my mother if she her faith will give,
And if for her child to own me she will at last be willing,
If I upon my bosom will show a golden cross, the proof
fulfilling.”

When those he sent had ridden farther into the land,
They found, in the palace seated, Queen U-te and Sigeband.
Then knew the king that the riders from Garadie came thither,
And that they to him were foemen ; at this both he and his men
were wroth together.

He asked of them how dared they to come within his land ?
Then one among them answered : “ We are sent here at the hand
Of your son, the youthful Hagen. If any fain would meet him,
He now is here, so near you, that you ere many hours, in truth,
may greet him.”

Then spake the kingly Sigeband : “ To cheat there is no need ;
The loss of my dear little one, who hath so long been dead,
Still my heart's deep sorrow doth too oft awaken.”
“ Ask, then, the queen, your lady, if for a falsehood should
our word be taken ?



Tale the Fourth.

HOW HAGEN WAS MET BY HIS FATHER AND MOTHER.

SOON both men and women riding there were seen ;
Then the brave young Hagen went forth to meet his kin.
Who 't was that came to greet him he now to know was seeking ;
The throng grew ever thicker of friends who came in haste,
their kindness speaking.

The king a friendly welcome into his land soon gave ;
He said : " To send men hither did you the boldness have,
To say that our queen beloved is in truth your mother ?
If the words are true you 've spoken, so glad as now I am
there 's not another."

His queen, the lovely U-te, with lofty breeding, said :
" Bid that for these new-comers lodgings now be made ;
I shall know right easily if he for the crown is fitted."
She found, in truth, the token, and, full of bliss, her
youthful son she greeted.

With eyes all wet with weeping, she kissed him on the mouth :
" Though I before was ailing, I now am well in sooth.
Welcome be thou, my Hagen, my only child, loved dearly !
All in the land of Sigeband right glad shall be for him
they lost so early."

The king to the youth came nearer ; his happiness was great.
For the hearty love he bore him his manly cheek was wet ;
With tears that hot had risen his eyes were overflowing.
For the child, from him erst stolen, rightly the father felt
the love he was showing.

The queenly U-te welcomed the homeless maids that day ;
Many clothes she gave them, both bright in hue and gray,
Of silk, with downy linings, that much the maidens wanted.
Their sorrows now were lightened by all the gifts the wife
of Sigeband granted.

Well they clothed the maidens, as their loveliness became ;
This they long had needed, and oft had blushed with shame ;
But, decked with gaudy trimmings, now they came less shyly.
The king and all his followers soon to the maidens gave
a welcome freely.

Hagen asked that friendship to the men of Garadie
Should by the king and his lieges be granted speedily ;
Beseeching his forgiveness for all their foul misdoing.
Soon, at the wish of Hagen, kindness to the pilgrims he was
showing.

When the king had kissed them and soothed his angry mood,
He to the shipwrecked pilgrims made their losses good.
To them it was a blessing, and praise to Hagen carried ;
The lands of the men of Ireland never since have they
as foemen harried.

Then their food and clothing the guests took out, for use,
And up on the sands they bore them, trusting in Hagen's truce ;
To take their rest for a fortnight them did he embolden.
The band of haughty pilgrims to give to him their thanks
were now beholden.

Then, in the midst of uproar, they rode away from the shore ;
Up the castle of Ballian came also many more,
Led by a tale of wonder that the son of the king was living, —
Of their king so rich and mighty ; a thing so strange was
to many past believing.

The water-weary pilgrims, long-tossed upon the sea,
When fourteen days were ended to leave the land were free.
To them by the host were given gifts of gold, bright shining ;
By the help of his son's great kindness he hoped a lasting
friendship to be winning.

Hagen his maidens never henceforth unthought-of leaves ;
Kindly doth he teach them oftentimes to bathe in the waves.
He showed himself most loving, ever for them caring ;
Rich clothes to them were given, and wise beyond his years
was all his bearing.

Now was the youth beginning to be a man well-grown.
He ever showed his kinsmen the skill to warriors known ;
Whate'er a knight befitteth with hand and weapon doing.
In the land of his father, Sigeband, his mighty sway he soon
to all was showing.

Hagen was ever learning what doth a king beseem.
He who of knights is leader must ever free from shame
And every stain be living ; this earns fair women's praises.
So gentle was he truly that every one with wonder on him
gazes.

Brave he was and daring, (such is the olden song,)
And ever was he ready to right his neighbor's wrong.
He high upheld his honor in all things, never fearing ;
Throughout the land, his praises were spoken and were sung
in all men's hearing.

In a waste he grew to manhood, that youthful son of a king,
Wild beasts his only fellows ; but none so quick could spring
That they to flee were able, if he for them was striving.
I ween both he and his maidens had wonders seen, while by
the waters living.

Rightly his name was Hagen ; but later men did own
He was " of kings the Devil ; " so came he to be known
In every land and kingdom, such was his strength in fighting.
The bold and wild young Hagen well did earn his name,
his foemen smiting.

He oft was begged by his kinsmen that he a wife would take ;
One so fair was near him that none had need to seek
A fairer or a lovelier, all earthly kingdoms over.
He himself had taught her ; with her in sorrow grown, and now
her lover.

She bore the name of Hilda ; from India she had come,
And love she oft had shown him under their wretched doom,
Since, in their early childhood, he in the cave had found her.
None better need he wish for, or seek in any land
the heavens under.

His father bade him hasten to be knighted with the sword,
With a hundred of his vassals. He gave, with kindly word,
To him and to his maidens, for clothes and horses needed,
A thousand marks of silver. Hagen said that the will of his
father should be heeded.

The news of this was bruited through many a prince's land ;
And the day when it should happen all did understand.
Soon the king's great kindness from all won praises golden
In a year and three days after the festival of knighting them
was holden.

For this the knights made busy, glad to be bidden there.
Soon they made them bucklers, bright and painted fair ;
In making showy saddles the workmen were not idle ;
With gold both red and shining the breastplate was bedecked,
as was the bridle.

Upon a broad green meadow the guests of the mighty king
Were bidden then to gather. He left not anything
That they from him could ask for ; seats were spread in order,
And many guests soon after were seen to ride to his land
from every border.

To those from far now ready the sword with him to bear
Fighting-gear was given, that beseemed them well to wear.
They who from other kingdoms into his land were faring
A thousand men were reckoned ; to give them clothes and steeds
he was not sparing.

Unto his friends then said he : “ If now you deem it fit
That men a king should call me, it therefore seemeth meet
That she my heart holds dearest a crown with me be wearing ;
Never shall I rest happy until, for her love to me, she this
is sharing.”

Then asked of him his followers who might the lady be,
Who, riding proudly before them, they at court should see ?
He said : “ Her name is Hilda, in India once living ;
To me and to my kindred she, as our queen, no shame will e'er
be giving.”

Well pleased was now his mother, when she the tidings had,
That they thought to crown the lady ; his father, too was glad.
Of them was she so worthy, that high in heart they set her.
With him the sword was taken by full six hundred ; the number
e'en was greater.

As is the way of Christians, both of them were bid
First for the crown to be hallowed ; this at once they did.
King Hagen with Queen Hilda in state were soon seen riding ;
Many games of knighthood were played at court by his men,
at Hagen's bidding.

Sigeband, too, rode with them ; high rose his heart as he went ;
He reckoned very little the wealth that must be spent.
When in jousts they had ridden, in ways most true and knightly,
Then were pages busy to make the halls for the guests
all fair and sightly.

Seats were brought together, strong, and broad, and long,
With stools besides, and tables. After the mass was sung,
U-te, his wife, came riding, with women round her thronging ;
These the youthful warriors to gaze on, as they rode, right
earnestly were longing

While the great King Sigeband sat by U-te's side,
And Hagen next to Hilda, all looked on with pride ;
And said, in his child-belovéd happy was their master.
Before them, while at table, the throng was great ; the clash
of spears grew faster.

After the king of Ireland at the meal his fill had eat,
By riders the grass was trodden ; flowers to dust they beat
With rude and heavy trampling, while in uproar riding.
The men best known for bravery, before the fair, in knightly
jousts were leading.

Four and twenty warriors, bearing well the shield,
Over the plain came riding ; bold were they in the field,
And now in many a struggle all their strength were spending.
'T was done in sight of the ladies, and hard it was of their
games to make an ending.

The brave young son of Sigeband himself in the onset rode.
Not loth was she to gaze on him who her with hope had wooed ;
That she to him was friendly in a far-off land forsaken,
For this would he reward her. No truer knight the sword
had ever taken.

Amid the throngs here riding, one thro' the dust might see
Men whose birth was princely, in number twelve and three ;
The Christian and the heathen to him their fiefs were owing,
And honor now, right heartily, to Sigeband and Hagen
they were showing.

Long those high times lasted ; their mirth, how loud it rose !
With crowding and with shouting great the bustle grows.
The king now bade the champions to end the strife so heated ;
And leave to them was given that they beside the ladies
should be seated.

Before his friends and kinsmen then spake King Sigeband :
"Unto my dear son Hagen give I now my land,
With the dwellers and the strongholds, be they far or nearer.
Let all my trusty liegemen have him now for their lord,
and hold none dearer."

As soon as his father, Sigeband, his sway did thus forego,
Hagen his lands and castles began in fief to bestow ;
This he did right freely, and to those to whom he gave them
He seemed so true and worthy that they indeed from him
would gladly have them.

As by feudal law is rightful, many stretched the hand
To the youthful king in fealty. To all, from every land,
Or far or near, then gave he clothes and riches hoarded.
A feast so freely given would now the poor not harm,
and with thanks be rewarded.

At court now dwelt the maidens who had before been brought
With him within those borders ; of these one now was sought,
And sent to the king and Hilda ; there she soon was dwelling.
The maid it was from Iserland ; of one more fair to see
none e'er was telling.

A princely youth soon wooed her, who saw the maiden fair
Beside the king's fair daughter. Soothly might he swear
That she by right was worthy to be of a crown the wearer.
She had erst been Hilda's playmate ; of widespread lands
she now became the sharer.

At last the guests were scattered, and all now left the king.
That high-born lady also men did straightway bring
Into the land of Norway, to her youthful lord's kind keeping.
After her heavy sorrows, blest with hope, she knew no more
of weeping.

Now, throughout all Ireland, did Hagen his sway begin.
If ever among his lieges a deed of wrong was seen,
At once for this the doer must pay with pain well dreaded ;
Of such, within a twelvemonth, eighty or more were for evil
deeds beheaded.

An inroad made he later into the lands of his foes.
He spared the poor, and brought not flames, to add to their woes ;
But if with pride and rudeness he was by any treated,
He quick laid waste their strongholds, and deadly wounds
in bitter wrath he meted.

When it came to fighting, he was a goodly knight.
Of heroes high in breeding he soon brought low the might ;
To all he showed his bravery, whether far or near him.
Of kings was he the Devil ; in truth his many foes
might greatly fear him.

The life he led was happy, nor of gladness asked he more.
His wife, from far-off India, to her lord and master bore
A fair and lovely daughter ; she also, like her mother,
Bore the name of Hilda ; well known is her tale to us, and to
many another.

Wild Hagen bade his maidens so to rear the child,
That the sun ne'er shone upon her ; nor were rough winds wild
Oft allowed to touch her. She was by ladies guarded,
And cared for by her kinsmen ; most wisely was the trust
to them awarded.

Before twelve years were ended the fair and well-born maid
Was comely more than any, and her name was widely spread ;
Rich and high-born princes gladly would have sought her,
And earnestly were thinking how they could win wild Hagen's
lovely daughter.

One of these same princes in Denmark had his home,
Within the land of Waleis. When the tale to him had come
About this lovely maiden, his longing ne'er would leave him ;
But he was scorned by Hagen, who swore of life and name
he would bereave him.

Whene'er to seek the maiden men were by wooers sent,
In his pride, wild Hagen upon their death was bent.
He to none would give her who than himself was weaker ;
Of the tale of the mighty Hagen, far and near, was every man
the speaker.

He bade that more than twenty of those sent there be hung ;
None might wreak his anger, though sore his heart was wrung.
When all had done their errand, for Hagen's daughter suing,
"Enough," soon went the saying : "'T were best that none should
go for her a-wooing."

But still by high-born warriors the maid was not unsought.
Let pride be ne'er so lofty, as we have long been taught,
There always is another with just as high a bearing ;
While to win her kindness his yearning grows, and his toil
he is never sparing.



Tale the fifth.

HOW WÂ-TE WAS SENT TO IRELAND AS A SUITOR.

HETTEL was lord in Daneland ; to be its king he rose ;
'T was in the Sturmisch marches, as many a one well knows ;
There abode his kindred, who ways of honor taught him.
Ortland also served him. His might and worth high fame
with all soon brought him.

One among his kinsfolk the name of Wâ-te bore ;
He for his lands and castles fealty to Hettel swore.
As kinsman of his master, he careful teaching gave him
In all things good and worthy, and in his watchful care did
ever have him.

A landed knight in Daneland was Wâ-te's sister's son,
The brave and upright Horant. Later his faith was shown
Unto his lord, King Hettel, who for his worth did crown him.
This to him he grudged not, but ever for a prince was glad
to own him.

Hettel, rich and mighty, at Hegeling held his seat,
Not far from the lord of Ortland; this is true, I weet.
He there owned many castles, eighty at least or over;
They who these strongholds guarded in truest faith and honor
held them ever.

Lord he was of Friesland, its waters and its land;
Ditmarsh, as well as Waleis, were swayed by his kingly hand.
Hettel was truly mighty; his kinsmen they were many;
Bold was he and daring, and 'gainst his foes he plotted,
well as any.

Hettel was an orphan, and so he felt the need
That he a wife should find him. To him, at last, were dead
Father as well as mother, who their lands had left him.
He friends in truth had many, yet found he much in life
that of bliss bereft him.

The best of these besought him some maiden's love to seek,
Who of his birth was worthy. The knight did answer make:
"I here know none who fitly should be o'er the Hegelings seated,
Nor is there any lady who, brought from far, should as
my queen be greeted."

Then spake a knight of Nifland, Morunc, a youthful lord:
"I know of a lovely maiden, of whom I oft have heard;
She in truth is fairer than all on earth now living.
Her will we gladly sue for, that she her troth to you may
soon be giving."

Then quoth the king: "Who is she? her name I pray you tell."
Then said Morunc: "'Tis Hilda, in Ireland she doth dwell;
Her father's name is Hagen; King Ger was her forefather.
If to this land she cometh, your life will then be blissful
altogether."

Then spake the young King Hettel: "I oft have heard it said,
Whoever woos this maiden her father's wrath must dread.
Many a worthy suitor his life for her has ended;
But none among my vassals must meet his death for having
me befriended."

Morunc quickly answered: "Then send to Horant's land,
And bid that he come hither; he well doth understand
The ways and moods of Hagen, for often has he seen them.
Unless his help he gives you, 't will come to nought, howe'er
your friends demean them."

He said: "Your will I follow, since she is so fair;
But if my friends shall seek her, yourself the suit must share;
And if unto your friendship the task I've trusted fitly,
Wealth shall you have and honor, when as the Hegeling's queen
she's greeted rightly."

He quickly sent out riders through the Danish land to haste;
By them was the mighty Horant, his nephew, found at last,
And to the court was bidden; to come must he be speedy,
Within seven days, not later, if he to help his lord in truth
were ready.

When Horant met the heralds, and did their errand hear,
Then for friendly service himself he would not spare.
Right gladly did he listen to the bidding of his master ;
But this, on a day thereafter, to him brought sorrow great,
and sore disaster.

To the court he soon went riding, with sixty of his men ;
Of friends at home young Horant to take his leave was seen.
He then made haste the faster, when now the tale was told him
How he must help his master, if for a faithful knight
he now would hold him.

Upon the seventh morning he came to Hettel's land ;
Decked in finest clothing was he and all his band.
The king to welcome Horant rode forth, most glad to greet him,
And saw that with him Fru-te, another Danish knight, was there
to meet him.

Good news it was of their coming, of which all men now spoke ;
Glad was the king to see them ; from him a share it took
Of the deep and heavy sorrow which his heart was filling.
“ Welcome, Cousin Fru-te ! ” cried he, the while he looked
upon him smiling.

When Horant now with Fru-te before the king did stand,
Then he asked for tidings of their home in the Danish land.
Both of them now answered : “ Not many days are ended
Since we in stormy battle with many deadly blows our lives
defended.”

He asked whence they had ridden from off the stormy field.
They said : " It was from Portugal, where the strife was held ;
There the mighty ruler from fighting would not spare us ;
Daily within our borders he did us wrong, and much ill-will
did bear us."

The young King Hettel answered : " Now cast all care away ;
I know that the aged Wâ-te will never yield the sway
He holds o'er the Sturmisch marches ; he of the land is owner ;
Who wins from him a castle will earn high praise and long
be held in honor."

Within the roomy palace the guests then took their seats.
Both Horant and Sir Fru-te with thoughtless, merry wits,
Of the loves of high-born ladies began to gossip gaily.
To them the young king listened, and costly gifts he gave
unto them freely.

Hettel turned to Horant, and thus to ask began :
" If aught hath reached your hearing, then tell me, if you can,
How 'tis with Lady Hilda, King Hagen's lovely daughter ?
To her would I send most gladly, and would that words of love
from me were brought her."

The youthful knight then answered : " She is to me well known ;
A maid so fair and lovely my eyes ne'er looked upon
As she, that maid of Ireland, Hilda, the rich and stately,
The daughter of wild Hagen ; to wear a crown with you
would befit her greatly."

On this King Hettel asked him : “ Now think you, can it be
That ever her lordly father will give this maid to me ?
If I deemed he were so friendly, I would seek to win her,
And would reward him ever who gave to me his ready help
to gain her.”

“ That can never happen,” to him young Horant said :
“ No rider with this errand to Hagen need be sped.
To hasten thither boldly I feel, myself, no longing ;
The man sent there to seek her is either slain with blows,
or dies by hanging.”

Then spake again King Hettel : “ Not so for her I care ;
To hang my trusty vassal should Hagen ever dare,
Then he, the king of Ireland, himself must death be facing.
Be he ne’er so boastful, he ’ll find his rashness is to him
no blessing.”

Then spake the knightly Fru-te : “ If Wâ-te deigns to go
Unto the king of Ireland, to woo this maid for you,
Lucky will be our errand, and we shall bring the lady ;
Or wounds throughout our bodies, e’en to the heart, to take
shall we be ready.”

Then said to him King Hettel : “ My men I now will send
With word to the lord of Sturm-land ; I do not fear the end,
For Wâ-te will hasten gladly wherever I shall bid him.
Bring Irold, too, from Friesland, with all his men, for sorely
do I need him.”

His riders then went quickly into the Sturmisch land,
Where the brave old Wâ-te they found among his band.
Then the word they gave him, now to the king to betake him ;
But Wâ-te felt great wonder, to know for what the Hegeling
king did seek him.

He asked if it were needful to bring, when he should go,
His breastplate and his helmet, and any followers, too ?
One of the heralds answered : “ We did not hear it spoken
That he had need of fighters ; for you alone did his words
a wish betoken.”

Wâ-te would be going, but left behind a guard,
To care for lands and castles. Then taking horse, at his word,
Twelve of his followers only with him from home now started ;
Wâ-te, the brave old warrior, at once on his way to court
in haste departed.

He reached the land of the Hegelings. When he now was seen,
As he came near Kampatille, but little sorrow, I ween,
Was felt by the kingly Hettel ; with speed he went to greet him,
And thought of the kindly welcome he would give his friend,
old Wâ-te, when he met him.

Right glad was he to see him ; with hearty speech he says ;
“ Sir Wâ-te, thou art welcome ; many are the days
Since I have looked upon you, when on our horses sitting,
Side by side together, we proudly met our foes with blows
befitting.”

Then answered him old Wâ-te : “ Ever should good friends
Be glad to be together ; that fight the better ends
Where, before the foeman, friends as one are fighting.”
Then by the hand he held him, to him his love and friendship
warmly plighting.

They took their seats together, nor place to other gave.
Hettel, he was mighty, and Wâ-te, he was brave ;
He yet was also haughty, and proud in all his bearing.
Hettel now was thinking how Wâ-te could be brought
to Ireland to be faring.

Then spake the knightly Hettel : “ For this I bade thee come ;
Need have I of riders, to send to Hagen’s home.
Truly I know of no one whom I would send the sooner
Than thee, my good friend Wâ-te, or who in this could bring me
greater honor.”

Then said the aged Wâ-te : “ Whatever I can do
To show my love and fealty, I ’ll gladly do for you.
Herein I may be trusted, to be for you bold-hearted ;
And to bring about your wishes, unless in this by death
I should be thwarted.”

Then quoth the kingly Hettel : “ Many friends have said
That if the mighty Hagen will my wooing heed,
And give to me his daughter, she, as my queen, would honor
Me and my kingdom also ; my heart is bent as a wife
and queen to own her.”

Angrily spoke Wâ-te : “ Whoever this has said
 Would truly feel no sorrow if I this day were dead.
 'Tis Fru-te, he of Denmark, I know it is no other,
 Who to this has stirred you, to send me to the maid,
your suit to further.

“ This young and lovely maiden is guarded now with care ;
 Horant and Fru-te also, who say she is so fair,
 And speak to you her praises, must go with me to seek her.
 Never shall I rest easy unless they strive with me your own
to make her.”

Both these faithful vassals King Hettel sent for soon ;
 To others good and trusty they also made it known,
 That by their king and master they at court were wanted.
 No more their thoughts men whispered, but freely spoke
of the coming raid, undaunted.

When Wâ-te, the brave old warrior, did on Horant look,
 And on the Danish Fru-te, how sharply then he spoke !
 “ Brave knights, may God reward you, to me you are so friendly,
 And of my fame so careful, and my trip to court this time
you help so kindly.

“ You are, forsooth, most willing that I this errand do ;
 But both of you are bounden with me thereon to go,
 To serve the king, our master, even as our duty calleth.
 He who my life endangers himself the risk must share, whate'er
befalleth.”

“For this I now am ready,” answered Horant the Dane ;
“If leave the king will grant us, I then will shun no pain,
Nor aught of toil will grudge me. Only to see this lady,
For me and for my kinsman, were happiness enough, and bliss
already.”

“Then we ought,” said Fru-te, “to take upon our way
Seven hundred warriors. No man doth honor pay
To Hagen without grudging. He is overweening, truly ;
If he thinks that he can crush us, he soon must lay aside
his boasting wholly.

“Sir king, you should bid your workmen a ship of cypress-wood
To build upon the river ; strong must it be and good,
So your band of warriors shall shipwreck ne’er be ruing.
From timber white as silver the lofty masts your men must
soon be hewing.

“Also food for your fighters you must now bespeak ;
And bid that men be busy helmets for us to make,
And hauberks strong for many ; when we these are wearing,
Then wild Hagen’s daughter we shall the easier win by craft
and daring.

“Also my nephew Horant, who is shrewd and wise,
Must go with us as a shopman ; (I grudge him not his guise)
There must he to the ladies be clasps and arm-bands selling,
With gold and costly jewels ; thus greater trust in us
will they be feeling.

“ For sale we also must carry weapons and clothing, too ;
And since wild Hagen’s daughter it is such risk to woo,
That only now by fighting one can hope to wed her,
Let Wâ-te choose the warriors to go with him, and home
to the king to lead her.”

Then spake the aged Wâ-te : “ A shop I cannot keep ;
Not often doth my money in coffers idly sleep ;
My lot I’ve shared with fighters, and that I still am doing ;
Therein I am not skilful, that I to ladies gew-gaws
should be showing.

“ But since my nephew Horant on me this task has laid,
He knows full well that Hagen will never yield the maid :
He prides himself on owning the strength of six and twenty ;
If he shall learn of our wooing, our hope to leave his land
will be but scanty.

“ Good king, now let us hasten, but bid that first our hull
With a deck of deal be covered ; let it, below, be full
Of knights both strong and doughty, who shall help be giving,
If ever the wild King Hagen forbids that we shall leave
his kingdom, living.

“ Of these brave knights a hundred, with outfits good for war,
Unto the land of Ireland we in our ships must bear ;
There shall my nephew Horant in his shop be seated,
Keeping two hundred near him ; thus shall the ladies’ coming
be awaited.

“Your men must also build us barges strong and wide,
To carry food and horses, and to sail our ships beside :
Enough for a year or longer we must take to feed us ;
And we will say to Hagen that to leave our land King Hettel
did forbid us,

“And that our lord and master great wrong to us hath wrought.
Then with our gifts so costly we often shall be brought
To Hagen and to Hilda, where they their court are keeping ;
Our gifts shall make us welcome, and kindness from the king
shall we be reaping.

“We then the tale will tell him, we wretched outlaws are ;
And thus at once the pity of Hagen we shall share.
To us, poor homeless wanderers, shelter will be granted,
And in his land King Hagen thenceforth will see that nought
by us is wanted.”

Hettel asked his warriors : “My friends, I pray you tell,
Since you to go are willing, how soon you hence will sail ? ”
“So soon as comes the summer, and May with gladsome weather,”
They said, “we shall be ready, and, riding again to court, will
we come hither.

“Meanwhile must men be making whatever we shall need, —
Sails and also rudders, well-made, and that with speed,
Barges wide, and galleys, to bear us to our haven ;
So the swell of the waters shall stir us not, nor make us
sick or craven.”

King Hettel said : " Ride quickly, now, to your land and home.
For horses and for clothing no cost to you shall come ;
For you and all your followers such outfit shall be ready,
That you no shame shall suffer, whenever you are seen by any
lady."

When he his leave had taken, Wâ-te to Sturmland rode ;
Horant and with him Fru-te followed in hurried mood,
Back to the land of Denmark, where they held the lordship.
To help their master Hettel they thought could never be to them
a hardship.

Then, in his home, King Hettel let his will be known ;
Of shipwrights and of workmen idle was not one.
While the ships were building to do their best they hastened ;
The beams that met together, were with bands of silver
strongly fastened.

All the spars and mast-trees, they were strong and good ;
Red gold, and brightly shining, was laid on the rudder-wood,
And like to fire was glowing : wealth their master blesses.
When time it was for leaving, the men their tasks had done,
and won high praises.

The ropes that held the anchors came from a far-off strand,
Brought from the shores of Araby ; never on sea or land,
Before that day or after, had any man seen better :
So might the men of the Hegelings easier make their way
o'er the deep sea-water.

They who the sails were making worked late, and early rose ;
For the king had bid them hurry. For making these they chose
Silken stuff from Abalie, as good as could be brought them.
Truly far from idle were, in those days, the busy hands that
 wrought them.

Can any one believe it ? They had the anchors made
Of purest beaten silver. The heart of the king was led
Strongly now to wooing ; no rest would he be knowing,
Nor of his men was sparing, until the day when they should
 thence be going.

Well-framed, with heavy planking, now the ships were seen,
Sound 'gainst war and weather. Then word was sent to the men,
That to seek the lovely lady they must soon be faring.
This was told to no one but those who the trust of the king
 were rightly sharing.

Wâ-te to meet King Hettel from Sturm-land held his course ;
With silver gear and housing, heavily went his horse.
To court went, too, his followers, four hundred men undaunted ;
And now the doughty Hettel brave knights enough, for guests,
 no longer wanted.

Morunc, the brave and daring, from Friesland thither went,
And with him brought two hundred. Word to the king was sent
That now, with helms and breastplates, they were thither riding ;
In haste came Irold also ; thus gladly Hettel's kinsmen did
 his bidding.

Thither rode from Denmark Horant young and brave ;
Hettel to do his errand did trusty liegemen have ;
A thousand men or over might he for this be sending ;
Only a prince so mighty of such a task had ever made
an ending.

Irold, too, of Ortland, was ready now to go :
E'en though on him King Hettel should never clothes bestow,
Yet, for himself and his followers, he had of these so many,
That wheresoe'er they were going, they never need to beg for
aught from any.

The king, as well beseemed him, greeted all the band ;
First, his liegeman Irold he kindly took by the hand ;
Then he turned to Wâ-te, to where he found him seated :
At last, his hardy warriors, ready to leave the land, his word
awaited.

To all it now was bidden that they should give good heed,
And everything make ready that knights could ever need.
Now were seen by the warriors the ships so fair and stately ;
To woo the lovely Hilda the king in all things showed
his forethought greatly.

Two new and well-made galleys they had upon the flood,
With two broad ships of burden ; both were strong and good.
A ship of state went with them ; than this had ne'er a better,
By any friend or foeman, on the shores of any land, been seen
upon the water.

To start they now are willing ; already on the ships
Were the clothes and horses loaded. Then from Wâ-te's lips
Came kindly words to Hettel ; he begged him to feel easy,
Till they should again be coming, for to do his bidding
they would all be busy.

The king to him said mournfully : “ I give into your care
The knights, untaught and youthful, who such risks will dare,
With you upon this errand : most earnestly I pray you
That, for your honor, daily you teach these youths with care,
and make them to obey you.”

Him thus Wâ-te answered : “ To that give not a thought ;
Keep a brave heart, I beg you, that here at home, in nought
You fail of being steadfast, where'er your honor reaches :
Watch well, too, o'er our holdings ; these youths shall learn
from me what wisdom teaches.”

The good and trusty Fru-te the wealth of the king did guard, —
The gold and costly jewels, and of many things a hoard.
The king was free in spending whatsoe'er was wanted ;
If Fru-te aught did ask for, thirty-fold to him he gladly
granted.

A hundred men were chosen, and now within the ship,
Wherein to woo the maiden his friends must cross the deep,
All craftily were hidden, to help them, if 't were needful.
Gifts both rich and worthy the king to give these faithful
men was heedful.

With these, among the followers, every rank was seen ;
Of knights and squires also, thirty hundred men,
Who, for toil and struggle, from far-off lands came riding.
Then said the king to his lieges : “ May God in heaven to you
give careful guiding.”

To him thus Horant answered : “ From fear now be you free ;
When you shall see us coming, you then with us will see
A maid so fair and lovely, you well may wish to greet her.”
This the king heard gladly, but far was the day when he
at last should meet her.

They took their leave with kisses, the king and many a guest ;
For these the king was feeling wearisome unrest.
While they for him are toiling, each hour he fear must borrow ;
He forsooth was downcast, and nought could cheer him,
in his mood of sorrow.

This was for his welfare, that a wind from out the north
Now their sails was swelling, and briskly helped them forth.
The ships were wafted evenly, as they from land were turning ;
But hardships they had known not the youths, upon their way,
erelong were learning.

The truth we cannot tell you, nor can it e'en be guessed,
For nights full six and thirty what lodgings gave them rest,
While upon the water. The youths they with them carried,
Bound by oaths of fealty, swore again to keep them, where'er
they tarried.

However willing were they to sail on the tossing sea,
Yet sometimes it befell them in great unrest to be.
Ease they took but seldom, as the waves would spare it ;
But he who ploughs the waters pain must often feel,
and yet must bear it.

After the waves had borne them full a thousand miles,
They came to Hagen's castle, where, as was said erewhiles,
He, the master of Ballian, shamefully had lorded :
This was a wicked falsehood, the deeds were never done
as the tale was worded.

When now the men from Hegeling over the sea had gone,
And neared wild Hagen's castle, their coming soon was known ;
Much the folk there wondered from what far kingdom sailing
The waves had borne them thither ; how finely they were clad
all men were telling.

First the ship with an anchor was fastened on the strand ;
To furl the sails then quickly each gave a ready hand.
It was not long thereafter before the news was bruited,
Throughout King Hagen's castle, that ships, with unknown men,
in his harbor floated.

Now on the shore they landed, and did their goods unlade ;
Whatever could be wanted on the sands, for sale, they spread,
And all that any asked for. In wealth they were not lacking ;
But tho' their men had silver, 't was little that they bought,
or for themselves were taking.

Clothed in the garb of tradesmen, on the shore did stand
Sixty men or over, well-dight, a goodly band.
Fru-te, the lord of Denmark, was busy as their leader ;
His clothing was far better than there was worn by any other
trader.

The worthy lord and master over Ballian town,
When he heard of their coming, and the riches they did own,
Rode down with many followers to where those crafty sellers
He found, himself awaiting. Kind was the mien of all
who there were dwellers.

First the master asked them : " Whence their way they had made,
And over the sea come thither ? " To him then Fru-te said :
" God have you in his keeping ; we from afar are sailing ;
Tradesmen truly are we ; our masters rich, near by, in ships
are dwelling."

" Let peace with us be plighted," old Wâ-te then began ;
But from the master's grimness, the truth to see was plain,
That, where he was the ruler, stern and harsh was his bearing.
Straightway then to Hagen they led the guests, who with
their tale were faring.

Hagen said, as he met them : " Safeguard to you I give ;
My peace I pledge you willingly. He shall no longer live,
But hang upon the gallows, who these guests shall harry :
Let them not be fearful ; them shall nothing harm while in my
land they tarry."

Rich and costly jewels they to Hagen gave,
In worth, of marks a thousand. From them he nought did crave,
Nor even so much as a penny ; but what for sale they offered
He begged of them to show him, such as to knights and ladies
might be proffered.

For all he thanked them warmly ; he said : “ If I should live
Not more than three days longer, for all that now they give
My guests shall be rewarded. If my liegeman do not heed me,
And these for aught be lacking, all shall then for this
with right upbraid me.”

Now the gifts they gave him the king with his men did share ;
Among them there were necklaces, fit for ladies fair,
With finger-rings and arm-bands, as well as ribands dainty,
And head-gear, to bedeck them : these the king to many gave
in plenty.

His wife and lovely daughter now most rightly thought
That never to their kingdom had gifts for them been brought,
That were so rare and costly, by sellers or by traders.
Horant and Wâ-te also in sending gifts to court were now
the leaders.

Sixty silken garments, the best that e'er were sold,
Up to the shore were carried, and forty wrought with gold.
They would have prized but lightly cloths from Bagdad even ;
Of linen suits a hundred, the best they had, now to the king
were given.

Beside the handsome clothing, made of silken stuff,
Of richest inner garments they also gave enough ;
There might perhaps be forty, or more, if reckoned fully ;
Could ever man buy praises, they by their costly gifts had
gained them truly.

Twelve Castilian horses, all saddled, were brought, I trow ;
Also many breastplates, and well-made helmets, too,
Men were bidden to carry ; twelve bucklers likewise bore they,
Rimmed with golden edges. Kind were Hagen's guests ;
free givers were they.

Then, too, with gifts came riding Horant the brave and bold ;
Irold the strong came with him ; this to the king was told :
'T was said to him, moreover, that those now thither faring
Of lands were the lords and owners. This might well be seen
by the gifts they were bearing.

After these came riding four and twenty men
Whom they were thither leading, well-bred were they, I ween ;
Such also was their clothing, they seemed as if well fitted,
And now in truth were coming, that very day to be by Hagen
knighted.

Then unto King Hagen one of his friends thus spake :
"The gifts the men now bring you 't is best you deign to take :
Never must you leave them unthanked for all their treasure."
Hagen lacked not riches, but yet his thanks he gave them
without measure.

He said : " I thank you kindly, as I of right should do."
Then he bade that his stewards to see the gifts should go ;
And also that the clothing, piece by piece, be shown them.
Glad were they to see them, and wondered greatly as they
gazed upon them.

Then said one of the stewards : " Hear now the truth I tell :
Chests there are of silver, and filled with gold as well,
With many costly jewels, rich and kingly even :
Marks fully twenty thousand the goods are worth, which they
to you have given."

Then the king thus answered : " Blessings on my guests !
I now will share with others the riches in these chests."
Then to his knights was given whate'er of these they wanted ;
To every one among them all that he might wish by the king
was granted.

The king now seated near him both the two young men, —
Irold and also Horant ; he began to ask them then,
" Whence to his kingdom sailing, they to come had striven ?
Gifts so rich and worthy have ne'er before by guests to me
been given."

Then spake the knightly Horant : " This shall you know full well ;
My lord, now hear us kindly while we our sorrows tell.
Outlawed wanderers are we, and from our homes were driven ;
A king most rich and mighty, to wreak his anger, woe to us
hath given."

Then spake again wild Hagen : “ What may be his name,
From whose rich kingdom driven, outcasts you became ?
You of wealth are owners, and, if not by his wits forsaken,
To keep such worthy lieges within his land he would
some pains have taken.”

He asked “ Who them had outlawed, and what name he bore ?
Of what misdoings guilty, had they to this far shore
Made their flight in sorrow, to ask the help of strangers ? ”
To him then answered Horant : “ To you will we make known
our woes and dangers.

“ He bears the name of ‘ Hettel, Lord of the Hegeling land ’ ;
Brave and mighty is he, and sways with a heavy hand.
We of all our happiness have been robbed and plundered ;
Of right are we embittered, since from our land and home
we now are sundered.”

To him spoke Hagen kindly : “ This to your good shall turn ;
I will in full repay you the losses that you mourn.
If I make myself a beggar, by thus so freely giving,
Yet from the king of the Hegelings you need not ask for help
while I am living.

“ If you, good knights,” he added, “ here with me will stay,
With you will I share right gladly the lands I own to-day ;
Such guerdon by King Hettel ne’er to you was given.
The wealth from you he has taken, that give I you, and more
by tenfold even.”

“To stay with you we are ready,” then said Horant the Dane,
“But we fear that when King Hettel shall learn that we were seen
Within the Irish borders, he will find a way to reach us;
And I am ever dreading that we can nowhere live,
and this he’ll teach us.”

Then to the band of wanderers the lordly Hagen said :
“Do what now I bid you, and a home for you is made.
Never will King Hettel dare for your harm to seek you
Within my land and kingdom ; it were a wrong to me from hence
to take you.”

He bade they should be sheltered, at once, within his town ;
Then to his men and lieges he made his wishes known,
That now unto the wanderers all honor should be granted.
The water-weary sailors soon found the rest that they
so long had wanted.

Then the townsmen freely did the king’s behest ;
To do it they were ready : houses, the very best,
Forty, or even over, were empty left, to be taken
By the Danish sailors ; their homes, by the king’s good lieges
were willingly forsaken.

Up on the beach were carried the wares, full many a pile,
That in the ships lay hidden. Their owners thought, the while,
That they would rather struggle with storms upon the water,
Than to seek their luck and welfare in wooing Hilda, Hagen’s
lovely daughter.

Hagen bade his followers : “ Now ask these guests of mine
If they will deign most kindly to eat my bread and wine,
Till they, within my kingdom, on lands they hold are living.”
The Danish Fru-te answered : “ To take your food would shame
to us be giving.

“ If erst the great King Hettel had been to us so good,
That he both gold and silver would give to us for food,
We in our houses had them, and might of them be wasteful ;
We e'en could stay our hunger, and feed thereon, if this to us
were tasteful.”

'T was bidden then by Fru-te that his booth should be set up.
To see for sale such riches men ne'er again could hope.
Never within their borders did any trader offer
Fine goods at such a bargain ; they easily were sold before
the day was over.

All could buy who wished them, gold and jewels rare.
The king, by greatest kindness, was to his guests made dear.
If any, without buying, still these treasures wanted,
The traders were so friendly that they, as gifts, the goods
to many granted.

Whate'er of Wâ-te or Fru-te was said by any one, —
Of all the deeds of kindness that here by them were done, —
The tale might not be trusted, how they for these were ready ;
They strove to gain high praises, and this at court was told
to many a lady.

Of the poor nor man nor woman for clothes was seen to lack ;
To those in need among them they gave their pledges back,
And from debt they freed them. To the princess, morn and even,
Oft by her faithful steward the tale of these guests from far
was truly given.

To the king she made her prayer : “ Dearest father mine,
Ask that these guests so worthy to ride to court will deign.
They say that one among them hath charms beyond all measure ;
Should he to your bidding listen, the sight of him ofttimes
would give me pleasure.”

To her the king thus answered : “ That shall quickly be ;
His well-bred ways and bearing I soon will let you see.”
But still the great King Hagen never yet had known him ;
Long the ladies waited till Wâ-te came, and they could
look upon him.

Word to the guests was carried ; to them 't was kindly said,
That if it e'er should happen that they of aught had need,
They should to the king betake them, and his food be sharing.
To Fru-te this was pleasing, for wise he was, not less
than he was daring.

Those who came from Denmark, when at court, took care
Ever to be blameless for the clothes that they should wear :
'T was so with the men of Wâ-te, from Sturmland thither faring,
And than himself no sword-knight in any land could show
a finer bearing.

Those who came with Morune wore mantles over all,
With robes from far Kampalia. Fiery red, as a coal,
Gold and gems that sparkled on their clothes were shining.
Irold, the daring champion, came not alone, young Hilda
bent on winning.

Thither came brave Horant ; all others he out-vied
In rich and costly clothing. With mantles long and wide,
Gay in hue and gaudy, his men were decked out brightly :
Those brave men from Denmark proudly came, and had
a look most knightly.

Tho' Hagen's birth was kingly, and lordly was his mood,
He yet went forth to meet them. His daughter, fair and good,
Rose up before old Wâ-te from where she now was seated.
Such was Wâ-te's bearing as if with smiles his friends
he never greeted.

She said, in way most seemly : " Welcome to you I give ;
Both I and the king, my father, must from your looks believe
That you are weary warriors, and sorely have been fighting.
Good-will the king will show you, and soon his faith to you
will he be plighting."

To her they all bent lowly ; their ways, they were well-bred.
The king then bade to be seated, as hosts are wont to bid.
Of drink to them was given, wine the best and rarest ;
Better ne'er was tasted in the home of any lord, albeit
the fairest.

In talk and fun and merriment seated were they all.
Soon the queenly maiden was seen to leave the hall :
But first she begged her father the kindness now to show her
To bid the knights so worthy to come to her, for pastime,
to her bower.

Her wish the king then granted, (so to us, 't is said) ;
His young and lovely daughter at this was truly glad.
Soon fair clothes and jewels the maidens all were wearing ;
And earnestly were watching the many knights from far,
to see their bearing.

When now the elder Hilda sat by her daughter fair,
Each one of her lovely maidens demeaned herself with care ;
So that all who saw her high in breeding thought her,
And nothing else could say of her, but that she was indeed
a king's fair daughter.

Now bade they that old Wâ-te should to the maids be brought ;
Though he was gray and aged, none the less they thought,
To guard against his wooing, they must as children meet him.
Then to the aged Wâ-te stepped forth the youthful queen,
right glad to greet him.

She was the first to do so, but wished she might be spared
When she now must kiss him : broad and gray was his beard,
And the hair of the aged Wâ-te with golden strings was braided.
He and the Danish Fru-te the queen's behest to seat them
slowly heeded.

Both the well-clad heroes before their seats now stood ;
Well they knew fine breeding, and made their teaching good.
In many a bitter struggle, in their manhood early,
They gained a name as warriors ; and men to them gave praises
for it fairly.

Queen Hilda and her daughter, in lively, merry mood,
Began to ask of Wâ-te, whether he thought it good,
Thus with lovely ladies to sit in ease and pleasure,
Or if to him 't were better his strength in stormy fight
with foes to measure?

The aged Wâ-te answered : “ To me the last seems best ;
Altho' among fair ladies glad am I to rest,
Never am I happier than when with knights most daring,
Wherever that may happen, upon the stormy field the fight
I am sharing.”

At this the gay young maiden broke into laughter loud ;
Well she saw, with ladies, his stern, uneasy mood.
With this in the halls yet longer were the maidens merry ;
Queen Hilda and her daughter to talk with Morunc's knights
were never weary.

She asked about old Wâ-te : “ Say, by what name is he known ?
Has he any liegemen ? Doth he lands and castles own ?
Has he a wife and children in the land whence he is roving ?
There, as I am thinking, at his home and hearth, there must be
little loving.”

Then answered one of the warriors: "Both children and a wife
In his home and land await him. His riches and his life
He risketh for his duty; a hero brave he has shown him.
A bold and daring champion, throughout his life, both friend
and foe have known him."

Irold the tale was telling about this fearless knight,
That never worthier liegeman, or bolder man in fight,
A king need e'er be seeking, his lands and castles over:
Though mildly now he bears him, there ne'er was found a stronger
or a braver.

The queen then said to Wâ-te: "Give heed to what I say;
Since in his Danish kingdom Hettel forbids your stay,
I here, within my borders, a home will gladly give you;
There lives no lord so mighty that he would ever dare from
hence to drive you."

Then to the queen he answered: "I too, myself, own land;
There give I clothes and horses, at will, with open hand.
To wait on you as liegeman, would make me sorry-hearted;
And from my lands and castles, more than a year, I never
can be parted."

At last they all were going: then begged the lovely queen,
That when at court they waited, they always might be seen
Seated among the ladies; no shame by this were done them:
Then said to her brave Irold, that in their home this seat
was ever shown them.

To load with gifts these wanderers the king was ever bent.
But in a mood so haughty had they been thither sent,
To no man were they willing to be for a mark beholden.
Hagen, the king, was lordly, and took it ill that their pride
should them embolden.

To the king they now betook them ; many were they who came ;
There they found, for pastime, for each some merry game :
Draughts were many playing, or spear and shield were trying ;
For these they cared but little, but ever were in Hagen's
praises vying.

As happens oft in Ireland, with every kind of fun
Forthwith the men made merry. In this old Wâ-te won
A friend for himself in Hagen ; but to win the ladies' praises,
Horant, the knight from Denmark, his time in lightsome frolic
with them passes.

Fru-te and also Wâ-te were knights full brave and bold ;
When standing near each other, both alike looked old.
Their locks were gray and hoary, and with gold were twisted ;
But where the bold were needed, to show their bravery
earnestly they listed.

The followers of King Hagen wore their shields at court,
With clubs as well as bucklers ; there they strove in sport,
In the sword-play slashing ; thrusts of spears they parried ;
Well themselves they shielded. The youthful knights in games
were never wearied.

Then asked the brave King Hagen of Wâ-te and his men,
“If, where they erst were living, such fights were ever seen,
Or such heavy onslaughts, as his good knights were dealing,
Here in his Irish kingdom?” A smile of scorn o’er Wâ-te’s face
was stealing.

Then quoth the knight from Sturmland: “The like I never saw;
If any here could teach it, from here would I not withdraw
Till a year was fully ended, and I had learned it rightly.
Whoe’er should be my master, for his care and pains would I
not reward him lightly.”

The king to him then answered: “For the love to you I bear,
I will bid my best of masters teach you his art with care,
Till the three strokes are easy, that, in field-storms raging,
Men give to one another; by this will you be helped
when battle waging.”

Then came a fencing-master, and began his craft to show
To Wâ-te, the daring fighter; in him he found a foe
Who fear for his life soon gave him. Wâ-te his onset parried,
With all the skill of a fencer. The face of Fru-te the Dane
a smile now carried.

To save himself, the teacher gave a spring as wide
As doth an untamed leopard. Wâ-te his weapon plied,
And in his hand it clattered, until the fire-sparks glistened
Upon his foeman’s buckler; he well might thank the youth
who to him had listened.

Then said the king, wild Hagen : “ Give me the sword in hand.
I will take a little pastime with him of the Sturmisch land ;
I will be his teacher, and he my four strokes be learning.
He for this will thank me.” Soon was the king high praise
from Wâ-te earning.

To him old Wâ-te answered : “ A pledge I now must hear
That I from you, great Hagen, no guile soe’er may fear ;
Should I by you be wounded, with ladies’ scorn shall I redden.”
In the fight was Wâ-te nimble ; such quickness to believe
should none be bidden.

The simple, untaught fencer smote Hagen many a blow ;
Till, like a wet brand steaming, was the king before his foe.
The learner outdid his teacher : well his strength he boasted.
The host laid strokes unnumbered upon the guest, who
in his skill had trusted.

Many looked on gladly to see the strength of both.
To own the skill of Wâ-te the king was nothing loth ;
He might have shown his anger, and brought no shame upon him.
Great was the strength of Wâ-te, but yet ’twas seen that Hagen
had outdone him.

To the king then spake old Wâ-te : “ Let each no favor show,
While we together struggle. Well have I learned from you
Your four strokes to be plying ; my thanks be you now sharing.”
Such thanks he later showed him as doth a fighting Frank
or Saxon daring.

No more a truce was thought of by Wâ-te and the king ;
With strokes that loud were crashing, the hall began to ring.
Harder blows than ever they gave, as now they battled ;
All their thrusts were sudden ; the knobs upon their swords
snapped off and rattled.

The two sat down to rest them ; then Hagen said to his guest :
“ You fain would be a learner, but you in truth are the best
That ever I was teaching the skill that the foeman dazes.
Wherever you are fighting, you in the field will win most
worthy praises.”

Then to the king spake Irold : “ My lord, the strife is done
That you so well were waging ; such fights have we seen won,
In the land of our king and master. Oft, at home, we freely
Try our skill with weapons ; knights and squires there meet
in matches daily.”

Then again spoke Hagen : “ Did I this understand,
I never a fighting weapon had taken in my hand.
No youth have I ever met with who was so quick at learning.”
When to these words they listened, the face of many a one
to smiles was turning.

Now by the king 'twas granted to his guests to pass the day
As they might all be choosing. Glad of this were they,
The men from out the Northland. When the hours grew weary,
They vied huge stones in hurling ; or else in shooting arrows
made them merry.



Tale the Sixth.

HOW SWEETLY HORANT SANG.

IT came to pass one evening, good luck did so befall,
That Horant, the knight of Daneland, sang before them all.
His singing was so wondrous that all who listened near him
Found his song well-pleasing ; the little birds all hushed
their notes to hear him.

King Hagen heard him gladly, and with him all his men :
The song of the Danish Horant friends for him did gain.
Likewise the queenly mother hearkened with ear befitting,
As it sounded thro' the opening where she upon the leaded
roof was sitting.

Then spake the fair young Hilda: "What is it that I hear?
Just now a song the sweetest was thrilling on mine ear,
That e'er from any singer I heard until this hour.
Would to God in heaven my chamberlain to raise such notes
had power!"

Then she bade them bring her him who so sweetly sung ;
Soon as the knight came forward, thanks were on her tongue.
For her with song the evening blissfully was ended ;
By Lady Hilda's women the minstrel-knight was carefully
befriended.

Then spake the lovely Hilda : " Once more you must let us hear
The songs that you this evening have made to us so dear.
Truly it were blissful every day, at even,
To hear from you such singing ; for this would great reward
to you be given."

" Since you your thanks, fair lady, have thus on me bestowed,
Every day will I gladly sing you a song as good ;
And whoso listens rightly shall find his pains departed,
His cares shall all be lessened, and he henceforth will
feel himself light-hearted."

When he his word had given, forthwith he left the queen.
Great reward in Ireland did his singing win ;
Never in his birthland had such to him been meted.
Thus did the knight from Denmark give his help to Hettel,
as him befitted.

Soon as the night was ended, with the early dawn of day,
Horant raised his carol ; the birds soon stopped their lay,
And to his song they listened, while in hedges hidden.
The folk who yet were sleeping rested no more, by his sweet
tones upbidden.

Horant's song rose softly, higher and yet more sweet ;
King Hagen also heard it, while near his wife was his seat.
From out their inner chamber drawn to the roof, they waited ;
Their guest of this had warning ; and Hilda the young gave ear,
where she was seated.

The daughter of wild Hagen with her maids around her heard
From where they sat and listened ; and now each little bird
Wholly forgot his singing, and in the court-yard lighted ;
The warriors hearkened also, and well the song of the Danish
minstrel greeted.

Thanks to him were given by women and by men ;
“ But,” said the Danish Fru-te, “ would that I ne'er again
Such songs might hear him singing. Whom would he be pleasing ?
To whom is my witless nephew such worthless morning-hymns
so bent on raising ? ”

Then spake King Hagen's liegemen : “ My lord, let him be heard ;
There 's none so sick is lying but would in truth be cheered,
If to the songs he listened which fall from him so sweetly.”
Said Hagen : “ Would to Heaven such skill to sing were mine ;
't would glad me greatly.”

When the knightly minstrel three songs to the end had sung,
No one there who heard him thought they were too long.
The turn of a hand, not longer, they had thought it lasted,
E'en if they had listened while for a thousand miles
a horseman hasted.

When his song he ended, and to leave his seat was seen,
The youthful, queenly maiden more blithe had never been,
Nor decked, at early morning, in gayer clothes or better ;
Forthwith the high-born lady sent to beg her father now
to meet her.

Then came her father quickly, and on the maiden looked,
While, in a mood of sadness, her father's chin she stroked ;
With her hand she coaxed him, to make her word the stronger,
And said : " My dearest father, bid that he at court may sing
yet longer."

He answered : " Best loved daughter, if again, at the hour of eve,
His songs he deigns to sing you, a thousand pounds I'll give.
But now a mien so lofty these guests of ours are wearing,
To us 't is not so pleasant here, at court, to give his songs
a hearing."

However much she pressed him, would the king no longer stay ;
Then strove again young Horant, and never on any day,
Had his knightly song been better. Sick and well together
All lost their wits in hearing, and none could leave who
to listen once came hither.

The wild beasts in the forest let their pasture grow ;
The little worms that creeping through grass are wont to go,
The fishes, too, that ever amidst the waves were swimming,
All now stopped to listen ; the singer's heart with pride
was overbrimming.

Whatever he might sing to them, to no one seemed it long ;
Ill vied with his song the choral which by priests is sung.
Even the bells no longer rang as of yore so sweetly ;
Every one who heard him was moved by Horant's song,
and saddened greatly.

Then begged the lovely maiden that he to her be brought ;
Without her father's knowledge, she slyly this besought.
From her mother, Hilda, also must the tale be hidden
That unto her, in her bower, unknown to all, the minstrel
had been bidden.

It was a yielding chamberlain who did the wages gain,
That, for his help, she gave him ; red gold it was, I ween,
Glittering and heavy, with armlets twelve, full-weighted.
'T was thus within her bower the maid, at eventide, the singer
greeted.

By hidden ways he did it ; Horant was glad indeed
That such good-will and kindness, at court, had been his meed.
To win her love for his master from far had he been faring ;
To his tuneful skill he owed it that she such friendly will
to him was bearing.

She bade her faithful chamberlain to stand before the house ;
That so there might be no one who could the threshold cross
Until the songs were ended, soon heard with praises truthful.
None went into her bower but Horant only and Morunc
the youthful.

Now her word she pledged him, and with it gave her hand :
 " Should she of a crown be wearer, and ever sway the land,
 That ne'er by the hand of any need he be further driven
 Than unto her in her castle ; there to live in honor would
 leave be given."

Of all she pressed upon him nothing would he take
Unless indeed a girdle. He said : " Let no man speak,
And say that I the maiden e'er for myself was wooing ;
I will to my master bring her, and for this his heart shall be
with bliss o'erflowing."

She asked : " Who is thy master ? By name how is he known ?
Have e'er his liegemen crowned him ? And any lands doth he own ?
For love of thee, most truly, good-will I bear him ever."
The knight from Denmark answered : " A king so rich and mighty
saw I never."

He said : " To none betray us, most fair and lovely maid ;
To thee will I tell most gladly what our master said,
When from his land we started, hither to come at his bidding ;
For thy dear sake, fair lady, unto thy father's land
and castle speeding."

She said : " Then tell me freely the errand on which you 're sent
By him you call your master ; if my will that way is bent
I shall let you know it truly, before we yet are parted."
But Horant feared wild Hagen, and began at court to feel
himself faint-hearted.

To the lady thus he answered : " To you he sends this word, —
That his heart for you is longing ; his love alone is stirred.
For him, I beg, fair lady, let now your kindness waken ;
He from other women has for your sake his love and longing
taken."

She said : " May God reward him ; such love for me he shows.
If he in birth is my fellow, I fain would be his spouse,
If you will deign to sing to me every morn and even."
He said : " That will I gladly ; to this no care by you need e'er
be given."

Quoth he to the queenly Hilda : " Most fair and high-born maid,
There daily live with my master, and long at court have staid,
Twelve minstrels who, before me, earn much higher praises ;
But, though sweet their singing, my lord, the king, in song
still better pleases."

She said : " If your loving master in song so skilful be,
Of longing for him, truly, I never can be free ;
My best of thanks I give him for the love he now is showing,
And, dared I leave my father, gladly from here would I
with you be going."

Then spake the knightly Morunc : " Lady, with us there are
Warriors full seven hundred : our weal or woe they share,
And each for this is ready ; if once in our hands we have you,
Know you nor fear nor sorrow lest we to meet wild Hagen's
wrath should leave you."

He said : " From Hagen's kingdom we wish forthwith to go ;
Therefore beg your father the kindness to us to show,
Youthful, high-born maiden, that he and your queenly mother
Will deign our bark to look on ; and you must also come,
e'en if no other."

“That will I do most gladly, if my father’s leave you have ;
Of him and those about him this boon you now must crave,
That I and my maidens also may ride to the shore some morning.
If he shall grant your wishes, three days before, of the time
you must give us warning.”

The first of all the chamberlains was wont, and had a right,
Often to be with the maidens. Just then, this very knight
There had come for pastime, and to give to them his greeting ;
There found he Horant and Morunc ; well might they fear some
harm was their lives awaiting.

He said to Lady Hilda : “Who are they sitting here ?”
From the lord so hot and hasty was never such wrath to fear.
He said : “Whoe’er allowed you to come into this bower ?
Whoso in this hath helped you ne’er showed you falser
friendship to this hour.”

She said : “Now soothe your anger : in peace pray let them live.
If to yourself great evil you do not wish to give,
You must unseen by any, them to their rooms be bringing ;
It else hath helped but little that his knightly songs
the minstrel here was singing.”

“Is this the knight,” he asked her, “they say so well can sing ?
E’en such a minstrel know I : never hath any king
Had a braver fighter. My father and his mother
Were children of one father ; worthier knight than he there’s
not another.”

The maid began to ask him : “Tell me, then, his name.”
He said : “Men call him Horant ; from the Danish land he came.
Although no crown he weareth, he yet for one is fitted :
We now know not each other, but once at Hettel’s court
our love we plighted.”

When Morunc, too, was telling that erst, in his fatherland,
He also had been outlawed, his heart was sorely pained.
His eyes with tears were welling, and now were overflowing ;
Then the queenly lady kindly looked on him,
her sorrow showing.

Then saw the chamberlain also how that his eyes were wet.
He said : “Most worthy lady, these friends whom here we meet
I know to be my kinsmen ; help now that all goes rightly
With both these worthy champions : most careful will I be
to keep them fitly.”

Much for them he sorrowed, and felt heart-pain, forsooth ;
“Durst I before my ladies, I would kiss upon the mouth
Each of these knights so worthy. The days indeed are many
Since tidings of King Hettel I could from a Hegeling ask,
or learn from any.”

Then spake the maiden further : “Since these thy kinsmen be,
Now so much the dearer are they as guests to me.
Known unto my father thou should’st quickly make them ;
They will not then so hastily to their homes afar across
the sea betake them.”

A busy talk began they, those two young heroes brave ;
Morunc unto the chamberlain his mind most freely gave.
He said for Lady Hilda they came within those borders ;
And that their master Hettel to bring her back had sent them,
as her warders.

Then said to them the chamberlain : “ A twofold care I feel,
As liegeman of my master, and to help you, too, as well.
How could I turn his anger, if he knew you now were seeking
To win his maiden daughter ? Never from here could you
your way be taking.”

Then spake the knightly Horant : “ Hear well what now I say ;
In four days' time to Hagen, we will come, and him will pray
That we may leave his kingdom, if such may be his pleasure.
The king will then make ready gifts for us of clothes,
as well as treasure.

“ We will ask for nothing further, (help you here must lend,)
But that Hagen shall be willing, as well beseems a friend,
To come to the shore to see us, my lady with him riding, —
His wife, the high-born Hilda ; there to see the ship in which
we're biding.

“ Might we in this be lucky, our toil we well shall spend ;
And, with a happy outcome, our sorrows have an end.
If only to the seashore he will ride with his daughter,
We well shall be rewarded at home by our master Hettel,
for whom we sought her.”

Then from out the castle they were led by the crafty man,
So that the kingly Hagen mistrusted not their plan.
When, for their floating shelter, they the courtyard quitted,
All they had done for their master should not, I ween, by him
at home be slighted.

They told the aged Wâ-te what yet to none was known :
They said the high-born maiden her love did freely own
Unto their master, Hettel, for whom they now had sought her ;
They talked with wise old Wâ-te how best to bring her home
across the water.

Then spake the aged Wâ-te : “ Were she once outside the gate,
And I the lovely maiden there might only meet,
However hard the struggle that there we had with the foeman,
To cross her father’s threshold none again should see that
lovely woman.”

Their plot, well-laid and crafty, to no one did they break,
But slyly made them ready their homeward way to take.
This they told the warriors on board their ship there lying ;
Not loth were they to hear it, for now to sail the weary men
were sighing.

They quickly brought together such goods as they did own ;
Then, in stillness whispered, their hidden thought made known.
Later, throughout Ireland, it was mourned, with bitter wailing ;
Though woe it brought to Hagen, the Hegeling’s greatness
would it soon be telling.

Upon the fourth day's morning to court they bravely rode,
With new and well-cut clothing; none better ever showed.
Then the guests there gathered were their wishes speaking;
Of the king and all his liegemen they asked that they their
leave might now be taking.

Then spake to them King Hagen: "Why will you leave my land?
So far as I was able, I have striven for this end, —
That you within my kingdom should meet with kindness only;
Now would you hence be sailing, leaving me here, to lead
a life all lonely."

To him old Wâ-te answered: "The Hegeling king, our lord,
Has sent to call us homeward; he will not hear a word
Of aught but our forgiveness. Then, too, for us are mourning
Those we left behind us; we therefore soon must back
on our way be turning."

Then said to him wild Hagen: "Your loss my heart doth break;
Horses and fine clothing deign, for my love, to take,
With gold and costly jewels. Right well it doth beseem me
For all your gifts to pay you; in this shall no one ever
dare to blame me."

Then said the hoary Wâ-te: "Too rich am I to-day
That I the gold you give us should wish to take away.
Our master, whose forgiveness our friends have lately won us,
The rich and mighty Hettel, in such a deed would truly
never own us.

“One thing we have yet further, my lord, to ask of thee ;
(If you this kindness show us, a worthy boon 't will be.)
It is that you shall witness how well we can be feasting ;
Of food for hearty eaters we have in store what might
three years be lasting.

“To all who ask we give it, for hence we sail o'er the deep ;
May God long give you honor, yourself may He ever keep.
We now betake us homeward, we here may bide no longer ;
Now may you and your kinsfolk ride with us to our ship ;
no guard were stronger.

“If but your lovely daughter, and with her my lady, your wife,
Shall look upon our riches, glad will it make our life,
And dear to us forever. If this to us be granted,
Great and good King Hagen, from you no other gifts
shall e'er be wanted.”

Then to his guests he answered, with seemly, well-bred mien :
“Since you are now so earnest, at early morn shall be seen
A hundred mares made ready, saddled for woman or maiden ;
I, too, will ride down with them ; right glad am I that to see
your ship I'm bidden.”

Then for the night they left him, and rode away to the shore.
Then up on the beach was carried of wine a goodly store,
That in the bark was lying ; for food they were not lacking.
By this the ship was lightened ; wisely had Fru-te of Denmark
his plans been making.



Tale the Seventh.

HOW THE MAIDENS CAME TO SEE THE SHIP, AND WERE
CARRIED TO HETTEL'S KINGDOM.

EARLY on the morrow, after the mass was said,
To don their richest clothing strove each wife and maid :
A throng of these King Hagen to the sandy shore was leading ;
And with them riding gayly a thousand stalwart Irish knights
were speeding.

Within the town of Ballian the guests had heard the mass.
Of all the woe and sorrow, that soon would come to pass,
Hagen as yet knew nothing : little honor was left him
By his guests' withdrawal ; this of his fair and well-born
child bereft him.

When now they all had ridden to the ships upon the strand,
Queen Hilda and her ladies were lifted down on the sand.
The young and lovely maidens to see the ships were taken :
The traders' booths were open, and the goods did wonder great
in the queen awaken.

Many fair-wrought jewels lay in sight in the shops,
Such as men prize highly ; King Hagen to see them stops,
And many with him also : soon as the goods were shown them,
The maidens, too, must see them, and rings and bands of gold
were pressed upon them.

To see the sights King Hagen into a boat had gone :
Not all the booths were open, nor all the goods were shown,
When Wâ-te's men heaved anchor up from the sea-sands deftly,
And Hilda with her maidens was borne away from the land
of her fathers swiftly.

For no one's hate and anger Wâ-te greatly cares ;
Little he recks what happens to the shops of costly wares :
Hilda, the queenly mother, was sundered from her daughter ;
The men, in the ship long hidden, up-sprang and sorrow made
for Hagen on the water.

Then the sails were hoisted, and 't was seen that they were set :
From the ship they threw the foemen, who thoroughly were wet,
Like sea-birds on the water, when near the sands they flutter.
For her daughter dear-belovéd sorrow and anger the queen
aloud did utter.

When the weaponed fighters by Hagen there were seen,
Then, in truth, how scornful and wrathful was his mien !
“ Now bring to me my long-spear, to feel it I will teach them ;
They all shall die full quickly when my strong right arm
with that shall reach them ! ”

Boldly then spoke Morunc : " Be not so much in haste !
Though now you think to fight us, and to rush on us so fast
With a thousand well-armed foemen, we yet will overthrow them,
And fling them into the water ; a damp, cold lodging we will
quickly show them ! "

Still, brave Hagen's followers the fight would not give o'er ;
The water shone and glistened with the armor that they wore ;
Then they drew their long-swords, spears were thickly flying ;
But oars were dipped full quickly, and fast the boats away
from the shore were hieing.

The bold and daring Wâ-te from the sands had given a bound
Into a well-manned row-boat ; loud did his mail resound,
As he, with fifty warriors, after Hilda hasted :
Hagen's careless followers now must rouse themselves,
no time they wasted.

Onward came King Hagen ; his fighting-gear he wore,
And a heavy sword, the sharpest, he proudly with him bore ;
But now the aged Wâ-te almost too long had waited ;
Wild and grim was Hagen, and high his spear he raised
'gainst his foe belated.

Loudly then he shouted, and bade his men make haste ;
None of all his followers would he allow to rest,
Hoping these guests, now fleeing, who had been such traitors,
Might be with speed o'ertaken, and either should be slain,
or bound in fetters.

The king had now about him fighters many and brave,
But yet he could not follow across the wild sea-wave ;
His ships were all unready, and many of them leaking,
When now he would be sailing ; of Hagen's blame for this were
all soon speaking.

On the gravelly sea-shore standing, no other way he knew
But that more ships be builded for him and his liegemen true,
And workmen called together, who must therein be speedy :
All came who now were able, and these he found to be both
skilled and ready.

Upon the seventh morning, there left the Irish land
The men sent forth by Hettel to ask for Hilda's hand,
And bring to him the lady. They were a thousand barely ;
Hagen brought against them thirty hundred men, if reckoned
fairly.

The daring knights of Denmark sent men home before,
To carry word to Hettel that Hagen's child they bore,
And to his land would bring her, with honor him befitting.
Though now they little thought it, still harder work ere long
must they be meeting.

To them their master, Hettel, in happy mood then spoke :
" My sorrows now are over. Great toils my liegemen took
For me in Hagen's kingdom, and now have brought me gladness ;
Since they on their errand left me, fear for their doom has filled
my heart with sadness.

“ Dear friends, if with your tidings you have not me betrayed,
And do not tell me falsely that you have seen the maid
Near to my land and kingdom, and in my friends’ safe-keeping,
For your tale will I reward you, and gladly will your praise
be ever speaking.”

They said: “ No lie we tell you, that we the maid have seen ;
But when we miles had measured, the daughter of the queen
Sadly said, for our welfare she feared, and was heavy-hearted,
Lest the king, her father, to follow with his ships e’en then
had started.”

For the tidings, Hettel gave them a hundred marks in worth ;
For all his knights there gathered, men at once brought forth
Swords as well as helmets, and shields for them were bidden :
Thus from Hettel’s castle they went, as if to court, to bring
the maiden.

All the men he was able Hettel for this now sought ;
Greatly was he hoping, and much thereof he thought,
So great a host to muster, and these so well outfitted,
That never to king’s fair daughter so fine a welcome might
again be meted.

In haste were all then bidden who ought with him to go ;
They still made ready slowly, till gifts he should bestow
Of all things that they needed ; they for this were waiting.
At length by him were gathered a thousand men or more,
for Hilda’s greeting.

Gay were they in clothing, — 'gainst this could none say nay, —
Poor as well as wealthy were shining in war-array :
To bring the lovely ladies to their new home and dwelling
Were Hettel's lieges earnest ; with lofty hopes of this
their hearts were swelling.

Soon as they left the castle, shouts the land did fill,
As they their way were making thro' lowland and o'er hill ;
Men saw upon the pathways crowds still thronging nearer :
Hettel hastened forward, to see the maid, than every other
dearer.

At last the aged Wâ-te, the knight from the Sturmisch land,
Had reached the Waalisch marches and stepped upon the sand.
There on the shore were gathered the sailors, water-weary ;
Shelter they sought for Hilda, and in a friendly land were
glad to tarry

Stakes for tents were driven near to the broad sea-flood
By the followers of Wâ-te ; they were in happy mood.
Erelong the news was bruited, and soon to them was given,
That Hettel, king of the Hegelings, had left his home, and now
was near them even ;

And that he with many liegemen was riding down to the shore,
To meet his well-belovéd. Now hoped the maids the more
That she with greatest honor should, as her birth befitted,
Be brought into his kingdom. No more the thought of strife
their hearts affrighted.

The guests for nothing wanted, they had both wine and food ;
Those who were living near them freely on them bestowed
The best that they were able ; the wants of all they heeded ;
Whate'er they had they gave them, and left them not to lack
for aught they needed.

Hettel now drew nearer to those who had reached his land ;
And with him, gathered hastily, the strong and goodly band,
Drawn from his father's kingdom. They came bedecked so gaily,
And in such glittering armor, the guests looked on full glad,
and praised them freely.

Then the men of the Hegelings came down upon the plain,
And soon the rushing riders a tilting-match began ;
All with youthful boldness for knightly prizes striving :
Then came the Danish Fru-te, and with him Wâ-te, wise as any
living.

They were seen from afar by Hettel ; happy in heart was he.
His horse he set a-prancing ; right glad was he to see
Two of his bravest liegemen, sent by him o'er the water,
With fighters bold to Ireland, in hopes to win for him wild
Hagen's daughter.

On him, too, looked they gladly, their worthy king, so good ;
Each day they spent there with him found them in happy mood.
Wâ-te with all his fellows, while far away they were living,
Had known much bitter hardship : for this would Hettel now
reward be giving.

As he met his friendly liegemen, King Hettel wore a smile ;
Then said he to them kindly : " Much have I feared erewhile
For you, my faithful helpers, and a heavy heart was bearing,
Lest in Hagen's castles my men were held, and all were
bondage sharing."

Then for love he kissed them, both those gray old men ;
His eyes had never rested on so glad a sight as then,
Nor on a fairer pasture had fed, with longing fonder.
I ween that never to Hettel was aught so full of bliss
and sudden wonder.

Then spake the aged Wâ-te : " No harm to us was done ;
But yet a sway so mighty I ne'er before have known,
As this that wild King Hagen over his lands now wieldeth :
His followers bear them proudly, and he himself in strength
to no one yieldeth.

" It was a day as happy as ever could be thought,
When we to you sent tidings that we had Hilda brought,
The loveliest of maidens (no falsehood have I spoken,
Believe the tale I tell you) that ever in this world
my eyes did look on."

The high-born knight then added : " Belike with greatest speed
Will come these daring foemen ; for this should you take heed
Lest the angry Hagen soon shall overtake us
Here within your marches ; if so, his hatred bitter woe
will make us."

Then Wâ-te and Sir Fru-te down to the shore did bring
Many worthy followers, knights of Hettel, the king,
There to see fair Hilda, and there must they await her.
Upon their shining bucklers many a spear-shaft crashed
in battle later.

Now came the fair young maiden, under a comely hat;
Then all the men of the Hegelings who on their horses sat
By the side of the king, their master, upon the grass alighted.
With merry hearts then gladly the well-bred throng their love
and friendship plighted.

Irold, he of Ortland, and Morunc of the Frisian land,
Both of those brave champions, one on either hand,
Came with lovely Hilda, and Hettel soon were meeting;
Worthy was she of praises. Now thought the maid to give
the king her greeting.

With her there came young maidens, twenty or even more,
All clad in fair white linen, — whiter none e'er wore, —
Or best of silken clothing, that could be found by any:
Proud were they to wear them, and, gaily decked, they there
were seen by many.

The king, both good and stately, then began to greet
With well-bred, seemly bearing, the maid he thought was meet
To wear the crown hereafter. He gazed on her with yearning;
Her in his arms he folded, and fondly kissed the maid,
her face upturning.

Then one by one he welcomed all the maidens fair ;
But one there was among them so lofty in her air
She might of birth be kingly : in nought her kin were lacking.
She was one of the maidens who with the griffin long
her home was making.

She bore the name of Hildeburg : from Hilda, Hagen's wife,
She ever had won the honor befitting her worthy life ;
Born in the land of Portugal, thence had she been taken.
She now saw many strangers : a longing sad for her friends
did this awaken.

Hettel to all the maidens gave a welcome free,
Yet was their lot no brighter ; for when they thought to see
An end of all their sadness, upon the coming morrow,
Soon as the day was dawning, there came to them again
as great a sorrow.

Her throng of high-born followers were greeted on every side ;
Near to Hagen's daughter on a flowery meadow wide,
Under silken awnings, many there were seated.
But Hagen was now too near them ; to them from him must
many ills be meted.





Tale the Eighth.

HOW HAGEN FOLLOWED HIS DAUGHTER.

WHEN the day was dawning, there was seen full well,
And known by Horant of Daneland, a cross upon a sail,
With other emblems blazoned, that pilgrims did betoken.
For such a band of pilgrims in Wâ-te's heart was little
love bespoken.

Loudly Morunc shouted to Irold brave and true :
“ Now ask our lord, King Hettel, what he thinks to do ?
A sail with the arms of Hagen comes to our shore too nearly :
Too long have we been sleeping, and well to be rid of this
will cost us dearly.”

To Hettel the tale was carried that the father of his bride,
Hither from Ireland sailing, with ships broad-built and wide
As well as many a galley, now their shore was nearing.
From Wâ-te and from Fru-te their wisest thoughts the king
was bent on hearing.

Both those knights of Denmark could hardly this believe,
Had not their eyes beheld it, that Hagen, with followers brave,
Seeking his daughter Hilda, to the river Waal was steering.
The men who came from Ortland lay happy on the beach,
no danger fearing.

The fair and noble Hilda soon heard the wondrous tale,
Whereat the kindly maiden did loudly thus bewail:
“My father, if he comes hither, soon will make such slaughter,
That none e’er knew the sorrow that will be felt by many
a wife and daughter.

“We ’gainst that can guard us,” answered the knight Irold:
“However he may bluster, I would not take of gold
A mountain’s weight in barter, that day when foes are mated,
Could I see my uncle Wâ-te near wild Hagen come,
with anger heated.”

Then the lovely maidens began to wail and mourn.
The ship was tossed and rolling, now by the west wind borne,
With warriors filled and crowded, near to Waal, the river.
They there, in heavy fighting, soon found a blood-stained
resting-place forever.

Wâ-te bade that Hilda on board a ship should stay.
To guard the queenly maiden, while near the shore it lay,
On every side all hastily men their shields were bearing:
To keep a watch o’er the ladies, there were on board a hundred
warriors daring.

Ready now for battle were all who to the strand
Had brought the lovely Hilda from her Irish fatherland,
Whence they the maid had stolen, to her father Hagen's sorrow.
Many, sound and healthy, must sorely fear for their lives
before the morrow.

Hettel was soon heard shouting and calling aloud to his men :
" Be on your guard, brave fighters ! Who never gold did gain,
To him it shall be measured, in handfuls, without weighing.
Let this be not forgotten, — that now your Irish foes you may
be slaying."

Bearing then their weapons, down they rushed to the sand ;
Stirred with warlike bustle was all the Waalisch strand.
Thither to King Hettel flocked his champions daring ;
Friends as well as foemen soon towards the self-same spot
were faring.

Now had Hagen also reached the sandy shore,
And men at him were hurling the spears they bravely bore :
Those upon the seashore well their lives then guarded
From the stormy Irish onset ; but wounds yet all the more
their bravery rewarded.

How seldom would a father have wished to send his child
Where sparks of fire, all-glowing, were struck by foemen wild
Forth from hardened helmets, in sight of many a maiden !
To have sailed with these roving fighters did now at last
the lovely Hilda sadden.

By turns they smote each other with heavy spears and long :
 Altho' themselves they guarded beneath their bucklers strong,
 Yet wounded thro' their hauberks, they were gashed and bloody ;
 And soon with flowing life-blood the waters' depths were
 deeply stained and ruddy.

Then to his trusty liegemen Hagen called aloud :
The sea gave back his shouting, — truly his strength was good, —
He bade them help to land him, their wounds by them unheeded ;
Glad were they to do it : thereby were spears in many
hearts imbedded.

Hagen now drew nearer, not far was he from the sand ;
His sword it clattered loudly ; Hettel, near at hand,
Was standing by the water, on the seashore waiting :
There, with daring followers, deeds he did that praise
should aye be meeting.

Hagen, wild with anger, leaped into the wave,
And to the shore he waded. Then on that warrior brave
Came a shower of lances ; like snowflakes falling thickly,
Fast they fell around him, shot by the Hegeling foemen,
thronging quickly.

Then from the clash of sword-blades a mighty noise arose.
Those who would slay wild Hagen soon beneath his blows
Were seen to reel and stagger. Hettel, the noble fighter,
Drew near to Hilda's father; at this the maiden wept, with
tears most bitter.

It was indeed a wonder, as we the tale have heard,
So strong and brave was Hagen, that Hettel, the Hegeling lord,
Before him held his footing. As soon as, wildly fighting,
They had reached each other, their helmets rang beneath
the heavy smiting.

But not so quickly ended was yet the stormy fight.
Soon was Hettel wounded by brave King Hagen's might :
Wâ-te the old of Sturmland, with his kin, to Hettel hasted,
With Irold, too, and Morunc, — knights as good as foemen's
lands e'er wasted.

Now came the brave old Fru-te and Wâ-te with his throng :
Knights there were a thousand, — the press of them was strong.
Hettel's Hegeling kinsmen, well their weapons plying,
Wounded many foemen ; on every side stretched low,
the men were lying.

After bravest fighting, now had reached the land
The followers of Hagen ; then crowded to the sand,
After his friends so faithful, a host from Ireland's borders.
Soon were helmets shattered : grimly they fought to win
the maids from their warders.

Hagen saw then near him Hettel, the youthful knight :
Many strong and stalwart were shorn of strength outright,
Both by those from Daneland and the Hegeling lieges :
Now to meet wild Hagen every one old Wâ-te loud
beseeches.

Then, by his strength, King Hagen broke thro' the crowd a path,
And with his sword hewed boldly ; well he wreaked his wrath,
Because his much-loved daughter from him by craft was taken ;
Coats of mail lay fallen : the wrongs of Hagen hate in him
did waken.

He might not quench his anger with the sword alone ;
By the thrust of his heavy long-spear soon were overthrown
Many a knight most daring : never the tale was given
By these unto their kinsmen, of how in the stormy fight
their luck had thriven.

Now came Wâ-te quickly, the knight well born and good ;
Soon of his well-loved kinsmen he saw the flowing blood,
Under the slash of broadswords, out of their armor dripping :
Of those who would have helped him, five hundred wounded men
in death were sleeping.

Everywhere were gathered friends as well as foes,
All in uproar minged ; a mighty din arose.
Wâ-te and wild Hagen rushed on each other madly,
Whoe'er could shun their pathway of all the risk he had fled
was thinking gladly.

Hagen laid on Wâ-te many a heavy blow, —
Well his strength he wielded. Their helmets were aglow
With fiery sparks outflashing, — like to brands they glittered ;
Each cleft the other's helmet, and ever still, each other's blows
they bettered.

The ground beneath was trembling with aged Wâ-te's stroke :
Scarcely could the maidens of his onslaught shun the shock.
Now the wounds of Hettel his faithful friends were binding ;
He then began to ask them where his cousin Wâ-te he could
be finding.

With Hagen, "of kings the Devil," he found old Wâ-te soon :
The skill of him of Sturmland to guard himself was shown :
Brave were both these warriors, and oft the tale was spoken
How Wâ-te the bold and Hagen in hardest strife had each
his anger wroken.

Hagen's spear was broken ere long on Wâ-te's shield :
Well in the fight he bore it, and strength enough did wield.
Ne'er on the field of warfare did blows of men fall thicker,
Even of bravest warriors ; Wâ-te scorned to flinch,
or seem the worker.

Hagen cleft the head-piece of Hettel's brave old man,
The trusty, daring Wâ-te, till blood from his helmet ran,
From out his wounds fast flowing. Now the wind blew colder,
For eventide was nearing ; the struggling throng in fight
but grew the bolder.

Wâ-te gave back in anger each grim and deadly blow,
Making the blood, like tear-drops, on Hagen's breast to flow ;
Strokes he gave his foeman, until the sword-blade glittered
On the bosses of his helmet ; daylight before his darkened
eyesight fluttered.

Wounded, too, was Irold, Ortland's champion brave.
Though many there lay dying from the wounds that Hagen gave,
Yet the blows of Wâ-te still did Hagen batter.
Sorely wept the maidens when of so many swords they heard
the clatter.

Now, in fear and sorrow, Hilda, the maiden fair,
Cried unto King Hettel, and begged of him to spare
Her father from old Wâ-te, the fight so grimly waging.
He called for his standard-bearer, and bade him lead his men
where the strife was raging.

Then the kingly Hettel right well and bravely fought;
Soon he found old Wâ-te, to whom no joy it brought:
Then Hettel called to Hagen: "Let hatred hence be driven;
So shall it raise your honor, if now our friends no more
to death be given."

Hagen shouted loudly, — fell indeed was his mood, —
"Who bids that we be parted?" Then cried the warrior good:
"I bid it, I, King Hettel, the Hegelings' lord and master,
Who for the Lady Hilda sent my friends so far, from you
to wrest her."

Then spake the lordly Hagen: "Since first to me 't was told
How you to win my daughter showed yourself so bold,
This to your name with warriors shame has ne'er been doing;
Clever was the cunning to which your winning of my child
is owing."

Hettel then sprang nearer, as oft by one is done,
Who thinks to stop the fighting. Grim was the mood yet shown
By the bold and aged Wâ-te; but he and Hagen yielded:
Then with all his followers Hagen stepped back, nor longer
his weapon wielded.

Now the lordly Hettel his helmet laid aside;
A truce was loudly called for by all, both far and wide;
'T was said by Hilda's father there was an end of fighting:
For many a day, the maidens had heard no tale their ears
so much delighting.

The men took off the armor which they in fight had worn,
And now at last they rested. Many then must mourn
For wounds, in warfare given, whence the blood was welling;
But many lay there also who never more on thoughts of war
were dwelling.

Then stepped forth King Hettel and near to Hagen stood,
And thus he spake to the warrior: "Since I well have wooed
Your lovely daughter Hilda, 't is fit that you allow her
To wear the crown beside me: my many well-bred knights
will fealty show her."

Then Hettel sent for Wâ-te, of whom he was in need;
For many years now ended, of him it had been said
That he from some wild woman had learned a leech's cunning:
Wâ-te, forsooth, was skilful to heal deep wounds and stanch
the life-blood running.

Wâ-te laid by his weapons ; his wounds he first had bound.
Herbs that were good for healing by him were quickly found ;
He had a box full costly, that in it held a plaster.
Now the fair Queen Hilda besought his help, and at his feet
she cast her.

She said, " My dear friend Wâ-te, my father heal, I pray ;
For this, whate'er you ask me, I ne'er will say you nay ;
And help his warriors also, who in the dust lie bleeding,
And show your skill to his liegemen who stood by him, when
he their help was needing.

" Nor must you be forgetful of those of the Hegeling land,
Who were friends to Hettel ; wet with their blood is the sand
On which they now are lying, as if a rain were falling :
Sorrowful tales of their fighting for me there ne'er can be
an end of telling."

Then spake the aged Wâ-te : " Their wounds I cannot heal, —
In that I will not meddle, until as friends they feel
Each unto the other, — Hagen brave and knightly,
And Hettel, my lord and master ; till then shall I withhold
my skill most rightly."

The high-born maiden answered : " This I may not dare
To ask of the king, my father ; his tears I did not spare,
And now have not the boldness to bring to him my greeting ;
Both he and all his kinsmen I fear would now my love with
scorn be meeting."

Then 't was asked of Hagen : “ My lord, may this now be,
That it would not stir your anger your daughter here to see,
The youthful, queenly Hilda ? If you for this are willing,
She will come most gladly, and soon your many wounds will
help in healing.”

“ Gladly will I see her, whatever she has done ;
To me will she be welcome : why should I her disown,
Here in a land of foemen, nor take her greeting kindly ?
To me and to my daughter, King Hettel must atone for deeds
unfriendly.”

Horant, the knight from Daneland, led her by the hand,
And with him went brave Fru-te, to where the king did stand ;
One maiden only with them looked on Hagen wounded.
For friends did Hilda sorrow, though Hettel's love for her
was all unbounded.

On Hildeburg and Hilda when Hagen now did look,
Then, from his seat upspringing, thus he quickly spoke :
“ Welcome be thou, my daughter, Hilda, most noble lady !
I cannot leave unspoken the greeting warm which I to give
am ready.”

His daughter he allowed not the care of his wounds to take ;
While Wâ-te these was binding he bade the maids step back, —
The youthful high-born ladies. Wâ-te's wish was the stronger
To heal her father quickly, that so his daughter there
might weep no longer.

Healed with plants and herbage and many a far-sought weed,
From all his pain did Hagen feel himself now freed ;
They eased his hurts with plaster, and when again the maiden
Turned to see her father, she found him well, with aches
no longer laden.

Wâ-te, the healing-master, made haste, — no time he lost ;
He hoped to gain such riches among this wounded host,
That scarce could they by camels be carried to his dwelling.
A skill so great and wondrous never, that I have heard,
have men been telling.

First he healed King Hettel, the lord of the Hegeling land ;
Then all he saw there wounded he helped by his skilful hand.
Those in the care of others still with pain did sicken ;
But they, when nursed by Wâ-te, were turned to life, tho' they
by death were stricken.

There would they no longer let the maidens stay.
Hagen said to Hilda : “ Elsewhere must we to-day
Find us rest and shelter ; while others must not idly
Leave the dead thus lying, who burial scarce can wait,
here scattered widely.”

Hettel begged King Hagen with him to his home to go ;
Though loath, to this he yielded, as soon as he came to know
That he, the king of the Hegelings, of many lands was owner :
Hagen then with his daughter went with him to his home,
and there had honor.

The youthful knights were singing, as they left the field.
Happy then were the living ; but, never to be healed,
They behind were leaving three hundred dead and dying,
The rich and poor together, slashed with the sword,
and pitifully lying.

Then the war-worn fighters through the land went home ;
All who there were dwelling were blithe to see them come :
But the kinsmen of the warriors who in death lay sleeping
Were slow their hearts to gladden ; they for kindred slain
long time were weeping.

Hettel and Hilda with him took their homeward way.
Many, bereft of fathers, sorely wept that day,
Whose after life was happy. The mighty Hettel later
Crowned the fair young Hilda ; by this the Hegeling name
became the greater.

Hettel now had thriven, — his suit he well did gain.
Old and young together with swords at court were seen,
As were the guests of Hagen who from the ships came kindly.
The wedding of his daughter was highly praised by Hagen,
now grown friendly.

Then with what great honor to the bridal seat was led
That high-born, lovely lady ! Moreover, it is said
That full five hundred liegemen then at court were knighted.
Fru-te the wise from Denmark to guard King Hettel's wealth
was thought well fitted.

The riches of King Hettel by Hagen now were seen ;
The tale had erst been told him by many of Hettel's kin,
That over seven principdoms well his sway had thriven.
All the poor there with them were home in gladness sent,
and lodgings given.

Hettel gave rich clothing to Ireland's warriors brave ;
Bright-red gold and silver, and horses, too, he gave.
The whole they scarce could carry, as they homeward wended :
Thus good friends he won him, and this for Hilda in highest
praises ended.

Upon the twelfth day's morning they left King Hettel's land.
The horses bred in Denmark led they out on the sand ;
Each his mane, thick hanging, down to his hoofs was shaking.
The guests from afar were happy that they King Hettel's
friendship had been making.

Grooms and also stewards with Hagen then did ride,
With cup-bearers and carvers. Ne'er, in his greatest pride,
In his home and kingdom, had he been served so truly.
The crown was worn by Hilda, and Hagen's heart with bliss
was brimming fully.

Food as well as lodgings they found upon their road ;
On Hagen and his followers all men their care bestowed :
So to their homes most gladly they the tale did carry
Of how the friends of Hettel in showing them all kindness
ne'er were weary.

Hagen greeted Hildeburg, and clasped her in his arms ;
He said, " Watch over Hilda for the love your bosom warms.
So great a throng of followers at times a woman dazes ;
Care for her so kindly that of your worth all men
shall speak with praises."

" My lord, that will I gladly : to you has much been told
Of the woes that with her mother I bore in days of old ;
And I for years my friendship for her did never loosen ;
Her for miles I followed ere for a lover you by her
were chosen."

Hagen bade the others their way to court to take ;
Never then could the maidens an end of weeping make :
Now by the hand he took them, and to Hettel they were given ;
He asked for them his kindness, since from their homes they
sadly had been riven.

Then said he to his daughter : " So well the crown now wear,
That neither I nor your mother the tale shall ever hear
That men ill-will do bear you. High your lot has raised you,
And you of blame were worthy, if when men spoke your name
they never praised you."

Low bowed to the king wild Hagen, and kissed his child again.
Neither by him nor his followers ever more was seen
The kingdom of the Hegeling : too far away was their dwelling.
Back to his home in Ballian, in his trusty ships, King Hagen
soon was sailing.

When he had reached his castle, and sat with the queen alone,
The mother of fair Hilda, Hagen was free to own
That none to win his daughter more fitly could have pleaded ;
And if he had yet others, he fain to the Hegeling land
would send them to be wedded.

Hilda for this gave praises to her master, Christ the Lord :
“That I of my dear daughter such happy news have heard
Fills my heart with gladness, and with bliss o’erflowing.
How fares it with her followers, and Hildeburg, who long
her love was showing?”

Then spake the kingly Hagen : “Now in their land and home
All of them are happy ; great hath our child become ;
Ne’er, with us, were her maidens clothed in such fine dresses.
There we now must leave them : for her were many breast-
plates hacked to pieces.”





Tale the Ninth.

HOW GUDRUN WAS SOUGHT BY SIEGFRIED.

WE speak no more of Hagen. A word may now be told
About King Hettel's kinsmen : they who land did hold
Ever owed him fealty for these and for their castles ;
To court they all came often when Hettel and Hilda sent
to call their vassals.

Wâ-te went to Sturmland, Morunc to Nifland rode ;
Horant, prince of Denmark, led his warriors good
To Givers, by the seashore, where as lord they held him ;
There their homes they guarded, and many, far and wide,
their master called him.

With mighty sway in Ortland Irold had his seat ;
Its lands he held of Hettel ; so, as a vassal meet,
Near and far to serve him, his duty was the greater :
The king was brave and worthy ; and ne'er for a lord of lands
was known a better.

If ever in any kingdom Hettel heard them speak
Of a fair and well-born maiden, her he sought to take
Into his home and castle, as handmaid to his lady :
Whatever Hilda wished for, to help wild Hagen's child
they all were ready.

The king, with his wife beside him, was happy on the throne ;
Their life was ever blissful. To all in the land 't was known
That better far and dearer than all on earth he thought her.
Never by all his kinsmen a lovelier could be found,
where'er they sought her.

Within seven years thereafter Hettel, in stormy fight,
Thrice to his foes gave battle. They who, day and night,
To wrong his name and honor did their utmost gladly,
Now by the knightly Hettel found themselves brought low
and chastened sadly.

His castles he did strengthen, and peace he gave to his land,
As well a king befitteth : such were the deeds of his hand,
That never in any kingdom, when his name was spoken,
Was it said he was faint-hearted. The praise of all did well
his worth betoken.

While, with name so worthy, Hettel held the throne,
Wâ-te, the man of wisdom, never left undone
His duty to his master, to see him three times yearly ;
Truly he was faithful, far and near, to the lord
he held so dearly.

Horant, the lord from Denmark, to court not seldom rode ;
Costly gems and clothing on the maids he there bestowed,
With gold and silken raiment, meet for women's wearing :
He from Daneland brought them, and to all who wished
was he of gifts unsparing.

The service true and steady that the liegemen of the king
Gave to the lordly Hettel honor to him did bring.
Praised was he for knighthood more than any other :
This Hilda also furthered, a queen herself, and child
of a queenly mother.

Hilda, Hagen's daughter, children two did bear
Unto her lord, King Hettel : to bring them up with care
His faithful friends were bidden. Soon among his vassals
Were the tidings bruited that an heir no more was lacking
for his lands and castles.

One became a warrior, Ortwin was his name ;
To Wâ-te he was trusted. It was the teacher's aim
That he from early boyhood should his thoughts be turning
To all things good and worthy ; to be a trusty knight he thus
was learning.

The very comely daughter of Hilda and the king
Was called Gu-drun the lovely : from the land of the Hegeling
To Denmark she was carried, to be in her kinsmen's wardship.
Thus they helped King Hettel, and this they never felt to be
a hardship.

When the maid grew older, her shape became so fair
That neither man nor woman to praise her could forbear :
Far from the maiden's birthplace, all her worth were telling.
Gu-drun her kinsfolk called her, in the Danish land
where now she had her dwelling.

That age she now was reaching when, had she been a man,
A sword she might have wielded. Many a prince was fain
To wed the lovely maiden, and sought her love and favor ;
But many came a-wooing who soon their hopes must lose,
and win her never.

However fair was Hilda, Hettel's lovely wife,
Yet was Gu-drun more lovely, and fair beyond belief ;
More fair than the early Hilda, erst to Ireland carried.
Above all other women Gu-drun was praised, ere yet the maid
was married.

Her father scorned to give her to the king of Alzabé ;
When he heard he could not win her to him 't was a sorry day.
He held himself most highly for all his kingly graces,
And thought there could be no one whose deeds, like his, were
worthy of men's praises.

Both brave he was and daring, and from the Moorland came :
He was known afar and widely, Siegfried was his name ;
A king was he full mighty over vassals seven.
He sued for Hilda's daughter, such tales of her lofty worth
to him were given.

He, with his faithful liegemen from far Icaria's strand,
Won many costly prizes there in Hettel's land :
His strong and doughty warriors, in sight of ladies seated
Before King Hettel's castle, in games of knighthood often
there were mated.

When Hilda and her daughter passed the hall within,
Before the house of Wigaleis there rose a mighty din
From warriors of the Moorland, who, all boldly dashing,
Rode in the sight of the women ; oft of spears and shields
was heard the clashing.

Never could knight in tilting better in this behave.
A friendly will she bore him, and oft kind words she gave,
Though he was brown to look on, and in hue was dusky even.
He for her love was yearning, yet for a wife she ne'er
to him was given.

This pained him beyond measure, and truly he was wroth
That he from far had ridden, yet gave she not her troth.
To burn the land of Hettel then did he threaten madly :
His followers from Moorland, when now his hopes were lost,
were mourning sadly.

From him was the maid withholden by Hettel's lofty pride ;
And now their loving friendship was ended on either side.
Then swore the Moor that never he his hate would slacken,
And that the grudge he bore him, whate'er befell, should
never be forsaken.

Then from the land of the Hegeling rode they all away.
When many years were ended, there came at last a day
When by a knight most worthy was bitter sorrow tasted ;
Then the foes of Herwic did him the worst they could,
nor in it rested.





Tale the Tenth.

HOW HARTMUT SENT TO WOO GUDRUN.

Now in the land of Normandy the tale was widely told,
That never fairer maiden did any man behold
Than was King Hettel's daughter, Gu-drun, the high-born lady.
A king, whose name was Hartmut, to her then turned his love,
to woo her ready.

Gerlind, Hartmut's mother, her wish to him made known,
That he should woo the maiden; her word he followed soon.
First they sent for his father, when they of this had spoken;
He bore the name of Ludwig, and in Norman lands he wore
the kingly token.

Then the aged father rode to see his son.
Of the end that he was seeking had Ludwig knowledge won;
But when to him he hearkened, and learned his wishes wholly,
Evil he foreboded, yet still the youth's fond hopes
upheld he fully.

“Who tells you,” said King Ludwig, “she is so very fair?
Tho’ she all lands were owning, the home is not so near,
Wherein the maid is dwelling, that we should go a-wooing;
If we sent our men before us to ask her love, their task
they would soon be ruing.”

Then did Hartmut answer: “For me ’t is not too far;
Whene’er the lord of a kingdom no pain or toil doth spare
To win a wife and riches, he gains a life-long blessing.
My wish, I pray you, follow; let men be sent, that they
my suit be pressing.”

Then spake his mother, Gerlind, of Normandy the queen:
“Letters must now be written; let clothes, the best e’er seen,
With gold, to those be given upon your errand speeding;
They, too, must learn the roadways that towards the home
of fair Gu-drun are leading.”

Then spake again King Ludwig: “Know you not full well
That Hilda, the maiden’s mother, did erst in Ireland dwell?
And know you not what happened to many a one who sought her?
Her kin are proud and lofty, and now will scorn the love
we shall have brought her.”

Then young Hartmut answered: “Tho’ with a warlike band
I afar must seek her, over sea and land,
That shall I do most willingly: my heart to her is given,
And never will I rest me till I for Hilda’s daughter
happily have striven.”

“Gladly will I help you,” King Ludwig then did say :
“Let this now make you happy ; ere long, upon the way
I’ll send twelve sumpter-horses bearing silver treasure ;
That when they hear our errand, our wealth and worth they
may more rightly measure.”

By Hartmut then were chosen sixty men, to send
To woo the fair young maiden, and help to him to lend ;
With food and clothing also well were they outfitted,
And on the road well guided : Ludwig was wise, and was
in this foresighted.

When everything was ready that soon the men would need,
Then were letters written, sealed, and given with speed,
Both by brave young Hartmut and his queenly mother.
Then from home they started ; so proud a throng there never
was another.

Fast they rode and steadily for many a day and night,
Until the land they sought for came at last in sight,
And they might tell the errand they were thither bringing.
Long was Hartmut waiting, while love and care were
in his heart upspringing.

Over land and rivers they took their toilsome way,
As far as in days a hundred a pasturing herd may stray,
Until the land of the Hegelings lay before them stretching.
Their steeds were worn and weary ere they gave the letters
they were fetching

At last they far had ridden, and to the sea had come,
Upon the shores of Denmark: sadly they long did roam,
Before they reached the kingdom, and its lord did know them;
Now they begged for guidance, and men were bid the nearest
way to show them.

The news was given to Horant, the knight well-bred and bold;
Now asked the errand-bearers, and the truth to them was told,
About King Hettel and Hilda, and all they had been hearing.
They saw the men of Hettel coming in throngs, their shields
and weapons bearing.

Horant, lord of Daneland, then to his liegemen spake,
And bade for the errand-bearers a safeguard now to make,
And that the men of Hartmut should be by them well guided
To the court of his lord, King Hettel; they grudged no toil,
and well his bidding heeded.

When thro' the Hegeling kingdom the heralds took their way,
So lordly was their bearing, that often men did say:
"These folk are rich and mighty, whatever they are seeking."
The news to the king was carried, and soon to him all men
the tale were speaking.

To all the guests from Normandy were lodgings given there;
The king now bade his liegemen to wait on them with care.
He knew not yet their errand, and why to him they had ridden;
But on the twelfth day, early, young Hartmut's men before
the king were bidden.

An earl there was among them ; how well his breeding showed !
Upon their clothing also were praises high bestowed ;
They rode the best of horses on which men e'er were seated,
And before the king they gathered, in fairest guise, that
well they might be greeted.

The king gave kindly welcome, as also did his men,
Until their wooing errand was unto him made plain :
Then were they ill-treated, and knew the king's hard feeling.
I ween the mighty Hettel to grant young Hartmut's wish
would ne'er be willing.

One who in that was skilful to the king the letters read ;
But he was greatly angered that they to court were led
By the good and upright Horant, a knight so brave and noble ;
And, had they not his friendship, they had not left the king
without more trouble.

Then spake to them King Hettel : " No good to you 't will bring
That you were sent a-wooing by Hartmut, your lord and king.
To pay for this full dearly you may well be fearing ;
Your kingly master's wishes both I and Lady Hilda are wroth
at hearing."

One among them answered : " Hartmut makes it known
That much he loves the maiden ; and if to wear the crown
In Normandy she deigneth, before his friends there living,
That he, a knight all spotless, will rightly earn the love
she shall be giving."

Then quoth the Lady Hilda : “ How can she be his wife ?
A hundred and three of his castles his father held in fief,
Within the land of Cardigan, from Hagen, my noble sire ;
It ill becomes my kinsmen to be King Ludwig’s vassals,
or owe him hire.

“ Ludwig dwelt in Scotland, and there it erst befell
That a brother of King Otto did wrong to Ludwig deal :
Both were Hagen’s vassals, and of him their lands had taken ;
And thus my father’s friendship for him was lost, and hate
instead did waken.

“ Say you now to Hartmut she ne’er his wife shall be.
Your lord is not so worthy that he to boast is free,
That he doth love my daughter, and she doth not disdain him ;
Bid him elsewhere be looking, if he be fain a queen for his land
to gain him.”

The heralds’ hearts were heavy ; ’t was not for their good name
That they, for miles full many, in sorrow and in shame,
Back to their homes in Normandy this news must carry sadly.
Hartmut, as well as Ludwig, was vexed that they herein
were foiled so badly.

Forthwith to them said Hartmut : “ Tell me now the truth,
The grand-daughter of Hagen have you seen, forsooth ?
Is the maid, Gu-drun, as lovely as men have here been saying ?
May God bring shame to Hettel, that he my suit with such
ill-will is paying ! ”

Then the earl thus answered : “ This can I truly say, —
Whoe’er shall see the maiden must feel her charms and sway ;
Above all maids and women, her worth is past the telling.”
Then quoth the kingly Hartmut : “ To live without her ne’er
shall I be willing.”

Whereon his mother, Gerlind, sadly thus did say,
With tears her lot bewailing : “ My son, oh, lack-a-day !
Alas that e’er the heralds to win the maiden started !
If we at home had kept them, e’en to this day had I been
still light-hearted.”





Tale the Eleventh.

HOW HERWIC SENT TO SEEK GUDRUN
AND HOW HARTMUT CAME HIMSELF.

HARTMUT left his wooing to wait for many a year.
Soon a tale was bruited ('t was true what men did hear)
Of one whose name was Herwic, a king as yet but youthful ;
Often his worth was spoken, and men yet speak of him
with praises truthful.

He began his wooing, trusting the lovely maid
Would take him for her lover ; long his hopes he fed,
And much he toiled to win her, both with love and riches :
But tho' the maid was willing, her father, Hettel, he in vain
beseeches.

Though Herwic long was striving, and men to seek her rode,
Yet was his wooing slighted ; for this his wrath he showed.
The heart of proud young Herwic by heavy care was fettered ;
Freely his love he gave her, and thought a life with her
could not be bettered.

There came at length a morning when it to them befell
That in the Hegeling kingdom both knights and maids as well,
With many lovely ladies, his coming never fearing,
Before them saw bold Hartmut; Hettel could not believe
he'd be so daring.

From this did endless evil soon come upon the land:
These guests high-born and worthy were yet an unknown band;
Hartmut and his kinsmen their host's goodwill were sharing,
And he the hope still harbored that the maid would yet
the crown with him be wearing.

Now before Queen Hilda by ladies he was seen
To stand with lofty breeding, and with a stately mien.
There the proud young Hartmut wore a look so knightly,
That he the love of ladies well might ask, and 't would be
granted rightly.

Well-grown was he in body, fair he was and bold,
Kind as well as lordly. Why I ne'er was told
Had Hettel and Queen Hilda from him withheld their daughter,
When he had thought to woo her; wroth was he to be scorned
when now he sought her.

Of her his heart had longed for he now had gained the sight;
There oft were stolen glances between Gu-drun and the knight.
He made it known to the maiden, by speech from others hidden,
That he was young King Hartmut, and from the Norman land
had lately ridden.

Then she told her wooer the pain to her it gave ;
And tho' she wished he ever a happy life might have,
Yet from her father's kingdom she begged him now to hasten,
For in the land of Hettel was his life at risk, and this
would never lessen.

She looked on him so kindly that now her heart was warned
That he should stay no longer, for here his suit was spurned.
Friendly was she to Hartmut, who her love so wanted,
But his hopes she little heeded, and while he wooed, not much
to him she granted.

At last her well-bred lover from Hettel's land must go ;
He bore upon his shoulders a heavy load of woe :
To wreak his wrath on Hettel would he now be choosing,
Yet feared he, if he harmed him, that he the maiden's love
would then be losing.

'T was thus the daring Hartmut the Hegeling kingdom left ;
Much he felt of sadness, though not of hope bereft.
He knew not yet the ending of his wooing of the maiden ;
For the sake of her, thereafter, were helmets cleft, and many
sorrow-laden.

When he had reached his kingdom, and home again did turn,
Where dwelt his father and mother, Hartmut, grim and stern,
For war with Hettel longing, began to make him ready.
Gerlind, the old she-devil, at all times spurred him on
with hatred steady.



Tale the Twelfth.

HOW HERWIC MADE WAR ON HETTEL,
AND HOW GUDRUN WAS BETROTHED TO HIM.

WHAT more befell young Hartmut we now forbear to say.
Upon the brave King Herwic a weight of sorrow lay,
As great as that of Hartmut, for love of the high-born lady.
He, with all his kinsmen, to woo Gu-drun, as best they might,
made ready.

Near her he was dwelling, and there he held his land.
A thousand times tho' daily he should send to ask her hand,
Ever would his wooing be met with scorn and flouting;
But though he now was thwarted, later on her, as his wife,
he was fondly doting.

The king forbade him longer to woo Gu-drun, his child;
Then sent he word in anger that never would he yield:
Hettel should see him coming, with men and shields, a-wooing;
And this to him and Hilda would evil bring, that they
would long be ruing.

Whose rede it was I know not, but thrice a thousand men,
Showing thus their friendship, were soon with Herwic seen.
By them against the Hegelings harm erelong was plotted
For the sake of the lovely maiden he fondly hoped would be
to him allotted.

Those who came from Sturmland the tale would not believe,
To those from Denmark also none the tidings gave;
But Irold, lord of Ortland, soon the word was hearing
That now the daring Herwic for warlike ends to Hettel's home
was faring.

When 't was known to Hettel that Herwic, fearing naught,
E'en now the land was nearing, and followers with him brought,
Then asked he of his kinsmen, and of the queen, his lady:
"What say you to the tidings? I hear that guests to our home
have come already."

She said: "What can I answer, but that 't is well and right,
When one such deeds is doing as befit a worthy knight,
Tho' good or ill it bring us, praise should they be earning.
Can aught amiss befall him? Herwic is wise, and aye for honor
yearning."

His queenly wife said further: "Yet must we beware,
That he may bring no burden unto our kinsmen here.
This have many told me, — 't is for the sake of your daughter
That he with many warriors has come into your borders,
o'er the water."

Hettel with his kinsmen had waited a little too long :
The wrath of young King Herwic now had waxen strong.
In the cool of the early morning, he, with followers daring,
Reached King Hettel's castle, and later with his men
the strife was sharing.

While yet the men were sleeping within King Hettel's halls,
The watchman from the castle down to them loudly calls :
" Up from your rest now, quickly ! Arm yourselves and listen !
Foes from abroad are coming ! E'en now, on their way, I see
the helmets glisten."

From off their beds upsprang they, no longer dared they lie ;
Whoe'er there was among them, in rank or low or high,
Must bear a heavy burden, for life and honor caring.
Thus the young King Herwic strove for a wife,
the storm of warfare daring.

Hettel and Queen Hilda had now to the window come :
Men they saw with Herwic, brought from a far-off home
Among the hills of Gâleis, where they had their dwelling ;
These the mighty Morunc in Wâleis knew, and oft of them
was telling.

The foes were seen by Hettel, thronging towards the gate.
Well Gu-drun's brave father must fear to meet their hate,
As they were rushing onward, tho' high his heart was swelling :
Much they roused his anger, but them his burghers helped
ere long in quelling.

Armed to guard the castle were a hundred men or more ;
Hettel himself fought boldly, goodwill for this he bore.
His lieges all were doughty, but yet they could not save him ;
Hard were the blows for Hettel, that in the fight the brave
young Herwic gave him.

Upon his foeman's helmet whizzing blasts, fire-hot,
Were struck by the daring Herwic. The many blows he smote
Gu-drun now saw with wonder, her eyes upon him feeding :
He seemed a knight most worthy, and love she felt, e'en though
her heart was bleeding.

Hettel bore his weapon grimly 'gainst his foe ;
Of strength no less than riches he had, in truth, enow :
But soon he did unwisely, he pressed on him too nearly,
And those within the castle saw the fight between them
all too clearly.

The sore-beleaguered dwellers the gates would gladly shut ;
But now their losses told them that this would nothing boot :
Friends as well as foemen near the gates were thronging,
And great was the hope of Herwic to win the maid for whom
his heart was longing.

Hettel then and Herwic against each other dashed,
In sight of all their followers ; flames shot out and flashed
On the bosses of the bucklers which they both were wearing :
But little while it lasted, ere knowledge of each other
they were sharing.

When Hettel saw in Herwic a warrior so proud,
And one so truly daring, he cried to all aloud :
“Should any here forbid me that I with him be friendly,
He knows the knight but little ; deadly wounds he hews,
in mood unkindly.”

Gu-drun, the lovely maiden, looked on, and heard the din.
Luck is round and rolling, like a ball, I ween ;
And since to end the fighting to her it was not given,
She hoped that, when 't was over, her father and his foe
would find their strength was even.

She then began to call to him, from out the palace hall :
“Hettel, my noble father, behold how blood doth fall,
From out the hauberks flowing ! Everywhere about us
The walls therewith are spattered ! A neighbor ill is Herwic,
and harm hath wrought us.

“If you would grant my wishes, you now will be at peace ;
Give rest to heart from anger, and let your fighting cease,
Till I can ask of Herwic, and he to us be telling,
About his land and kingdom, and where his nearest kinsmen
have their dwelling.”

Then said the proud young Herwic : “Not yet may peace begin,
Unless without my weapons I your love may win.
If rest a while be granted, the knowledge you are seeking
I then will give you freely, and of my kinsmen will to you
be speaking.”

Now, for love of the maiden, the strife did they forego.
Then shook they off their armor, each battle-weary foe,
And bathed in running waters, from rusty stains to free them.
They soon were cheered and rested, and none could grudge
in happy mood to see them.

A hundred knights with Herwic went from the field to find
Gu-drun, the Hegeling maiden, still wavering in her mind.
She, with other ladies, gave him welcome kindly ;
But the worthy, high-born Herwic hardly dared to think
their wishes friendly.

The fair and comely maiden showed the guests their seats ;
The bravery of Herwic ere long with love she meets :
His high and noble breeding earned him kindest greeting.
'T was thought Gu-drun and Hilda should grant his suit,
without a longer waiting.

To the ladies then spake Herwic : " I oft have heard it said
That you of me speak lightly, and think me lowly bred :
Your scorn may bring you sorrow, after all my striving ;
The rich may from the poorest a blessing gain, the while
with them they 're living."

She said : " Where is the maiden who could behold with scorn
A knight who strove so bravely, or from his love could turn ?
Believe me," said the maiden, " I do not hold you lightly ;
Never maid more kindly has looked on you, or prized
your worth more rightly.

“ If now my friends and kindred leave for this will give,
Even as you wish it, with you I will gladly live.”
Then with fondest glances he her eye was seeking :
In her heart she bore him, and owned the truth to all,
no falsehood speaking.

The brave and happy Herwic begged that he might dare
To woo the fair young maiden. Now to grant his prayer
Were Hettel and Hilda ready ; but first must they be knowing
Whether Gu-drun, their daughter, was glad or sorry for the
kingly Herwic's wooing.

Herwic was quick in learning how kindly was her mood :
And now the brave young warrior before the maiden stood,
In shape as fair and comely as if the hand of a master
On a white wall had drawn him : while there he stood her love
but grew the faster.

“ If you your love will give me,” he said, “ most lovely maid,
Then shall my truest worship to you be ever paid ;
Throughout my lands and castles to you there shall be given
My kinsmen's faithful service, and ne'er shall I repent
that thus I've striven.”

She said : “ I give you freely the love for which you pray ;
By all your toils and daring you well have earned to-day
That you and all my kindred foes shall be no longer.
Now none can make me sorrow, and every day our bliss
shall grow the stronger.”

Then they sent for Hettel: thus ended was the fight.
Soon came he to his daughter; and many a faithful knight
Followed the king, their master, who unto him had ridden
From all the Hegeling kingdom. Thus to the strife a long
farewell was bidden.

Now when Hettel's kinsmen their wish for this did speak,
Then asked he of his daughter if she would gladly take
Herwic, the knight so noble, who in his heart had set her.
Then said the lovely maiden: "There's not another I could
love the better."

They then betrothed the maiden at once to the knightly king,
Who in his land would crown her. This did gladness bring
To him, and sorrow likewise: ere many years were ended,
And she to him was wedded, good knights in stormy fight
their lives defended.

To take the maiden with him Herwic now was fain;
But this her mother grudged him: thereby much woe and pain
Came upon him later from foes as yet unheeded.
The king was told by Hilda that longer time ere she be
crowned was needed.

They thought it best for Herwic to leave the maiden there,
While he with other women might pass the time elsewhere,
And wait to wed the lady until a year were ended.
This learned the men of Alzabie: to wait so long for her
young Herwic ill befriended.



Tale the Thirteenth.

HOW SIEGFRIED MADE WAR AGAINST HERWIC.

SIEGFRIED, king of Moorland, called for all his men ;
Ships were soon made ready, wherever they were seen ;
Then with food and weapons to load them it was bidden,
For war against King Herwic : from all but faithful friends
his thoughts were hidden.

A score of wide, strong barges bade he to be made.
I ween they liked it little to whom the king now said
That forthwith unto Sealand to fight must they be faring ;
And he would thither hasten as soon as, winter o'er,
springtide was nearing.

Eighty thousand warriors soon to him had come ;
Of fighting men in Alzabie none were left at home.
Then swore the Moorland princes for war to make them ready ;
Some of these still lingered, others to follow with the king
were speedy.

Then against the Sealands the threat of war he made.
This roused the wrath of Herwic, who well might him upbraid;
To earn the hate of Siegfried wrong had he done him never.
His marches and his castles he bade his men to guard,
now more than ever.

Then he said in sorrow to friends who came in haste
That foes would burn his castles, and his lands lay waste :
All he could give his liegemen, that he held but lightly.
They took their wages gladly ; that war would bring them
riches, hoped they rightly.

About the gladsome May-time, there went across the sea
Warriors out of Alzabie, and eke from Abakie.
Onward came they proudly, as tho' the world's end seeking ;
Many now trod boldly who in the dust their rest would soon
be taking.

Into the land of Herwic they cast the burning brand.
Then all whom he could gather, and all his friends at hand,
Rode to the field with Herwic. Thro' war-storms grimly driven,
They with their lives must bargain for gold and gems
and silver to them given.

To him, the king of Sealand, great ill erelong was wrought.
A stalwart foeman was he : Aha, how well he fought !
He made the land the richer with the dead there lying :
The old in fight grew youthful : the strong were slain,
who recked not yet of dying.

Long the fighting lasted, till thickly lay the dead :
Then to the brave King Herwic came at last the need
To flee into his marches, for life he there was turning ;
All his lands lay smoking : of this to Gu-drun, his lady,
sent he warning.

Now to the land of Hettel men at his bidding went :
Many tears and bitter they shed when they were sent
To find the great King Hettel, and the tale to him to carry.
They were not long in showing unto the king their plight
so hard and dreary.

Tho' sad in mood he found them, a welcome kind he gave,
Such as far-off wanderers and homeless friends should have.
He asked if from their homesteads they were hither driven,
When foes their lands had wasted, and all their marches had
to flames been given.

Then to him they answered : " In sorrow did we leave :
The faithful men of Herwic, from early morn till eve,
Sell their lives full dearly, and well his gifts are earning ;
They fight for name and honor : for this at home are many
women mourning."

Then to them said Hettel : " To my daughter make it known ;
Whatever she shall wish for at once shall that be done.
If she for vengeance calleth for the wrongs he wrought you,
We then will help you gladly, and pay him back the ill that he
has brought you."

Then in her arms she pressed him, her eyes with weeping wet :
“ Help, O dearest father ! My woes are all too great,
Unless your many liegemen, with ready hand, are willing
To help my good friend Herwic : none else can end the strife,
my sorrow healing.”

“ That will I leave to no one,” the king did freely say ;
“ I will haste to help King Herwic, and wait not many a day.
As well as I am able, I will end your sorrow :
I will call for the aged Wâ-te and many other friends,
before the morrow.

“ He will bring from Sturmland all the men of his lands ;
And when 't is known by Morunc how ill with us it stands,
Fighters full a thousand to bring will he be speedy.
Our foes shall find out quickly, that under helmets we
to march are ready.

“ Horant, too, from Denmark shall bring upon the way
Of men full thrice a thousand : nor will Irold stay ;
But he will raise his banner, and hasten to the slaughter.
Then, too, thy brother Ortwin will come, and all will earn
the blessing of my daughter.”

The heralds soon went riding whom the maid did send.
Her friends far off were living, but all who help would lend
To heal the maiden's sorrow would honor great be earning ;
Knights would she warmly welcome : for this erelong the more
to her were turning.

Hilda, the maiden's mother, unto her daughter spake :
" Whoe'er is quick to help you, and now his shield shall take
To follow with your warriors when they to war are faring,
Whate'er we gain by fighting he shall, in truth, henceforth
with us be sharing."

Then the chests were opened ; men to court soon bore
Whate'er therein was lying, of fighting-gear a store,
Fast with steel well studded ; then the knights were laden
With armor white as silver : this made glad the heart
of the queenly maiden.

To full a thousand warriors were given clothes and steeds ;
Out of stalls men brought them, as oft the horse one leads,
When, along the highways, men to the fight go riding.
Of all the king's good horses they left but very few at rest
abiding.

When from his queenly lady the king his leave did take,
Both Hilda and her daughter began to weep for his sake ;
But on the knights forth riding gladly they were gazing,
And said : " May God in heaven so help the fight that men
may you be praising."

After they all were gathered without the castle gate,
Youths were there heard singing, hoping for plunder great.
Each thought, by hardest fighting, to win himself much riches ;
But far must they yet be riding, for long the way to their
master's foemen stretches.

Now 't was told to Herwie, men fast for help had gone.
The foes from fight ne'er rested, by anger driven on ;
From early morn to even, they oft to the strife were bidden :
But now the friends of Herwie on every side drew near,
nor long lay hidden.

When this the men of Karadie did learn, they well might fear
That now two kings against them in the fight should share :
For them it was unlucky that Hettel now was leading
His many fighters thither ; he from afar had come, to Herwie
speeding.

Friends were they to each other ; so both would meet the foe.
These, the men from Moorland, bold themselves did show :
One saw by all their bearing they would from none be flying ;
Those who with them struggled by hardest toil must their
reward be buying.

Wâ-te, the very daring, with all his knights had come ;
Gu-drun, the lovely lady, had called him from his home
To help her lover, Herwie, and a host had ridden hither :
Whate'er might now befall them, later full happy rode they
thence together.

Although their foes were heathen, from out the Moorish land,
They might not back be driven : one well might understand
That in any earthly kingdom they were the best and boldest.
To all who came to meet them they gave a sorry welcome
and a shelter coldest.

Herwic, king of Sealand, his loss would now make good
Upon his foes from Alzabie. For this must flow the blood
On either side of many ; to friends and kin were given
Wounds full fast and heavy : to bear his own was hard
for Hettel even.

When they had come together of whom I spoke before,
Bringing all their followers, gladness they knew no more ;
On them were ever resting heavy care and sorrow
For what the night might bring them. They thought :
“ How shall we live to see the morrow ? ”

Thrice with the Moorish foemen they strove on the stormy field,
While peace was given the castle, as knights are wont to yield.
Again with sword and spear-shaft they the strife would settle :
Peace not yet they wished for, but wounds the more they got
in hard-fought battle.

Nor Herwic's men nor Siegfried's yet would leave the fight ;
They to the last had struggled, and many a bravest knight
Upon the field lay wounded, or in death was sleeping.
This was told to the women, who now began a wild, unmeasured
weeping.

How well the daring Wâ-te in battle-storm did fight !
Strong was he and skilful, and oft the aged knight
Gave to the foe heart-sorrow, by all the ill he wrought him :
Ever to fight with his warriors, by the side of the boldest
and best, his wishes taught him.

Horant, too, from Denmark, brave was he enough !
Beneath his hand were shattered helmets strong and tough :
Ne'er by him 't was forgotten to wear his armor shining ;
Ill he wrought to many, and oft the ranks of his foemen
he was thinning.

The quick and fearless Morunc boldly stretched his hand
Ofttimes beyond his buckler, and oft the fight he gained.
To shun the king of Moorland ne'er would he be seeking ;
Upon that king, so mighty, he the wrath of Herwic now was
wreaking.

The great and doughty Hettel, when that his daughter fair
Had sent to beg her father in Herwic's fight to share,
That peace at last might follow, fought for him not idly :
If life were dear to any, 't were best to shun King Hettel's
borders widely.

Bravely strove King Herwic on the field and at the gate ;
None than he fought better. His head was often wet,
Beneath his armor dripping, with sweat that fast was oozing.
In death were many deafened ; they who would crush him must
their lives be losing.

Wigaleis, the faithful, great ill to many wrought.
Sir Fru-te, too, from Daneland, with knightly prowess fought :
The thanks of all his fellows he should of right be sharing ;
He strove where the fight was stormy, and none e'er knew
an aged knight so daring.

The lord who came from Ortland, Ortwin, brave and young,
Showed the hand of a warrior ; it was on many a tongue,
That never man in warfare bore himself more boldly :
Wounds he gave the deepest, and this by none was ever told of
coldly.

For twelve long days of fighting, earnestly they strove.
The men led on by Hettel oft their spear-shafts drove
Thro' their foes' light bucklers, as close they met together :
The fighters proud from Moorland sorely rued the day that
brought them thither.

Upon the thirteenth morning, ere early mass was said,
With sorry heart spake Siegfried : " How many here lie dead
Of all our bravest warriors ! In his lofty wooing
The king of Sealand also here to himself has evil great
been doing."

Then to the men of Karadie made he known his will,
To a stronghold to betake them, there their wounds to heal :
They, with those from Alzabie, were earnest to go thither ;
Right glad were these far-riders that all in death might not
be found together.

Then to a sheltering castle to turn they all began,
Where onward, fast beside it, a wide, deep river ran.
While they were thither riding, fleeing away from danger,
They were still seen fighting with those who ne'er would yield
their homes to a stranger.

Now against King Hettel the king of Moorland rode :
Well might one believe it, his former warlike mood
Was but a slight beginning ; he soon a foe was meeting
Who many of his kinsmen with deep and deadly wounds of late
was greeting.

Hettel, he of the Hegelings, and Siegfried, the Moorland king,
There unto the struggle all their strength did bring ;
Shields were hacked to pieces by the swords they wielded :
The mighty lord of Moorland to the castle fled, nor to him
of Daneland yielded.

Camps by the men from Denmark for themselves were made :
Then the beleaguered warriors, — it cannot be gainsaid, —
E'er many days were over, with care were burdened sadly ;
However good their shelter, all would then have been at home
more gladly.

Thus the boastful fighters were by the foeman's hand
Fast held within the stronghold ; nor was their knightly band
Now able to give battle, although for this yet longing.
Their castle well they guarded, as best they might, wherein
they now were thronging.





Tale the Fourteenth.

HOW HETTEL SENT TIDINGS FROM HERWIC'S LAND.

HETTEL then sent tidings, to still their fears at home.
To the fair and high-born ladies men with news did come,
That unto the old and youthful, throughout the stormy fighting,
Good luck had aye befallen ; and now, with hope must they
for them be waiting.

He bade his men to tell them how Siegfried was besieged,
While he with all his followers war against him waged,
To help the lord of Sealand, loved by Gu-drun, his daughter ;
That all, as they were able, daily fought for her, and for him
who sought her.

Hettel's queen, fair Hilda, the hope began to have
That luck would follow Herwic and all his warriors brave ;
And, as their worth befitted, all might well be speeding.
Then said Gu-drun : " God grant it, that they our friends may
back in health be leading."

By Wâ-te's men from Sturmland, the foes from Alzabie
And all who came from Moorland were kept away from the sea ;
Sadly must they tarry within the sheltering castle :
In Wâ-te and in Fru-te foes they had with whom they ill
could wrestle.

Loudly swore King Hettel the castle ne'er to leave ;
That he and all his followers still to the end would strive,
Till those to him had yielded who now the Moor befriended.
Unwise had been their inroad, and this for them one day
in sorrow ended.

Meanwhile the spies of Hartmut, whom he had thither sent,
Tho' little good they looked for, from the Norman border went ;
Ever to learn what happened they a watch were keeping,
And from the stormy warfare they hoped that Hettel might
no gain be reaping.

Now they saw that Siegfried, the Moorland king high-born,
Was kept within the castle, besieged both eve and morn ;
Thence could he sally never, and this he knew with sorrow ;
His lands so far were lying, he little help from them
could hope to borrow.

The Norman errand-bearers, sent forth their watch to make
By Ludwig and young Hartmut, to them now hastened back :
The happy news they carried, and soon at home were giving,
That Hettel, the king, and Herwic were busy now, in warfare
ever striving.

To them the lord of Normandy thanks for the tidings gave,
And asked them : " Can you tell us how long those foemen brave,
The men from the land of Karadie, will in Sealand tarry,
Fighting 'gainst its warriors, till they, their wrongs avenged,
of war are weary ? "

One of them made answer : " The truth you now may hear :
There they yet must linger more than another year.
Never from their stronghold will the Hegelings free them ;
They there so well are guarded, that on their homeward way
none e'er shall see them."

Then the knight of Normandy, the daring Hartmut, spake :
" This frees my heart from sorrow, and hope in me doth wake !
If they are now beleaguered, then are we well befriended ;
We must to Hegeling hasten, ere Hettel's fight with Siegfried
shall be ended."

Ludwig and young Hartmut had both the selfsame mind, —
Had they ten thousand fighters whom they at once could find,
Gu-drun they might lay hold on, and to their home might carry,
Before her father, Hettel, came back again from the land
where he did tarry.

Hartmut's mother, Gerlind, earnestly gave thought
To wreak her wrath on Hettel, that he to harm be brought,
Because her dear son Hartmut he shamefully had slighted.
She wished the aged Wâ-te and Fru-te might be hanged,
for the help they plighted.

Then spake the old she-devil : “ Good knights, your hire behold !
If you will now ride thither, my silver and my gold,
That will I give you freely, — but women shall not share it.
I care not if Hettel and Hilda shall rue their wrong, and
ne’er again will dare it.”

Quoth Ludwig, Hartmut’s father : “ We from our Norman land
Forthwith must make an inroad : soon will I have at hand
Twenty thousand fighters whom I for war will gather ;
With these it will be easy to seize Gu-drun, and bear her
from her father.”

Then spake the youthful Hartmut : “ Might ever this betide,
That Hilda’s lovely daughter I here should see my bride,
I would not take in barter for that a princedom fairest ;
Then might we here together pass our lives, each one
to the other dearest.”

Busily his followers, hour by hour, gave thought
How they could do his wishes. A host King Ludwig brought
To lead against the Hegelings ; well were they outfitted.
How should Hilda know it, that soon thereby her welfare
would be blighted ?

The wife of Ludwig also helped them as she could.
For this she plotted ever, that fair Gu-drun be wooed,
And, as the bride of Hartmut, to Normandy be carried ;
She did her best most busily that the maid one day should
to her son be married.

Ludwig said to Hartmut, his well beloved son :
"Think well, O knight most worthy, no toil we now must shun,
Until our foes are mastered and from their lands are driven.
Reward the guests who help us ; to our men at home by me
shall gifts be given."

These they soon were sharing, all and every one.
Never yet in Suabia gifts so rich were known,
Of steeds for war or burden, saddles, and shields fair shining ;
I ween they were gladly given : Ludwig ne'er before such
thanks was winning.

Quickly all made ready to start upon their way.
Sailors were found by Ludwig ; skilful men were they,
Who the deep sea-pathways knew, and well could follow ;
Hard must they be toiling to win their wages high
upon the billow.

Now, in seemly measure, fit were they to go.
Throughout the lands and highways soon the news did grow
That Ludwig and young Hartmut home and land were leaving.
They yet would see much sorrow, when they erelong their
Hegeling foe were braving.

When to the shore they had ridden, ships were floating there,
That workmen well had builded, the knights away to bear ;
Gerlind's gold and riches had made them strong and steady.
Nor Wâ-te the old nor Fru-te of this knew aught, nor were
for their coming ready.

With three and twenty thousand they sailed the waters o'er.
Now for Gu-drun young Hartmut a weight of sorrow bore :
This, before his followers, to hide he was not earnest ;
He hoped to meet King Hettel, and him to overcome in strife
the sternest.

As yet they knew not fully how they his land could reach.
To the sons of many a mother the raid did sorrow teach.
Near to the shores of Ortland the rolling billows bore them,
Before 't was known to Hettel : now Hilda's castle rose
in sight before them.

The warriors led by Hartmut were still twelve miles away ;
Yet had they come already over the wide, deep sea,
Unto the land of the Hegelings, and to its shores so nearly
That castles, towers, and palaces in Hilda's town they all
could see most clearly.

Ludwig, king of Normandy, bade that on the sand
They now should drop the anchors ; he then gave word to land
To all his men together, and bade them do it quickly :
They now had come so near them, they feared the Hegeling
bands would gather thickly.

Then bore they up the weapons, with shields and helmets good,
That they had with them carried over the heaving flood :
They to fight made ready ; yet they at first bethought them
To send through the land their runners, to learn if friendly
helpers might be brought them.



Tale the fifteenth.

HOW HARTMUT CARRIED AWAY GUDRUN.

Now at Hartmut's bidding heralds quickly rode
To where the queenly Hilda and her daughter dear abode.
To them his word they carried, that if to wed the maiden
They should think him worthy, her and her mother both
it well might gladden.

If she her love would give him, as he had asked before, —
Ofttimes his heart was heavy for the love to her he bore, —
That he would ever serve her so long as he was living,
And many lands wide-reaching, held of his father, would to
her be giving.

But if she would not love him, she then would earn his hate;
He asked of her that kindly she his love would meet,
So that he to his fatherland his lovely bride might carry
Without a fight or struggle. To hope for this brave Hartmut
ne'er was weary.

Did she gainsay his wooing, Hartmut sent this word :
“ I will not be bought with silver, albeit a heavy hoard,
To leave in peace her kingdom ; she yet shall give me heeding.
I will show Gu-drun, fair maiden, brave knights enough, to be
for her eyes fine feeding !

“ Further, good errand-bearers, this say to her from me :
I ne’er will leave her borders to sail on the wide, deep sea ;
Better will I think it to be hewn in pieces even,
Unless the Hegeling maiden will follow me hence, to me
in wedlock given.

“ But, should she scorn me wholly, and never my bride will be,
Then me, with my daring fighters, riding here she will see.
Before the Hegeling castle I will then leave lying
Twenty thousand warriors, on both sides of the roadway, dead
or dying.

“ Since by the craft of Wigaleis King Hettel has been led,
And by the aged Wâ-te, hither our way we’ve made
Into the Hegeling kingdom, time and toil thus spending ;
For this shall many be fatherless, and glad shall I be
of the whole to make an ending.”

Those sent forth by Hartmut fast on their way did ride,
For he bade them wait no longer. They came to a castle wide,
By name ycleped Matelan ; therein was Hilda dwelling,
And with her was her daughter, the maid about whose charms
all men were telling.

With them sent Hartmut also two earls of wealth and name,
Who with him out of Normandy over the waters came.
He bade them see Queen Hilda, and kindly to bespeak her ;
To pledge to her his friendship, and say that his goodwill
would ne'er forsake her.

Of her they must ask her daughter, for him who in his mind
So high had ever set her, above all womankind :
In worthy love he wooed her, and she would rank be taking
That for aye would make her happy ; to do her will she ne'er
would find him lacking.

To the maiden's waiting-women the news was quickly told,
That from out the land of Normandy a band of wooers bold
Hither rode to Matelan, and for Gu-drun were suing :
Hilda hushed the tidings, for now Gu-drun in fright the tale
was ruing.

Queen Hilda's faithful warders opened soon the gate ;
Those who had ridden thither need no longer wait ;
They to come in were bidden. The gate was thrown wide open,
And the men sent there by Hartmut into Matelan rode :
no ill to them did happen.

They quickly told their wishes, to see King Hettel's wife.
It was not yet allowed them ; they who should guard her life,
And to the king must answer, at first had this forbidden :
They never left uncared for Hilda the queen, and eke Gu-drun
the maiden.

At last the men of Hartmut into the hall were led.
To them the queenly Hilda kindly greeting made,
As did Gu-drun the lady, with fair and lofty bearing ;
But she, the high-born maiden, love for Herwic in her heart
was wearing.

Altho' they felt unfriendly, yet drink they gave to the men
Ere yet they told their errand ; freely then the queen
Bade them to be seated before herself and her daughter.
She begged them then to tell her : " What boon to seek had
brought them o'er the water ? "

All the men of Hartmut before their seats yet stood,
As well-bred men beseemeth, and errand-bearers should.
Then they told the ladies what they would there be doing, —
That for their master, Hartmut, they for the fair Gu-drun
had come a-wooing.

The high-born maiden answered : " Of this I nought will hear, —
That with the young King Hartmut I the crown should share,
Before our friendly kinsmen, and troth to him be plighted :
The name of the knight is Herwic whose love shall never
by myself be slighted.

" To him I am betrothed ; me he chose for a wife,
And him for myself I have taken. Ever, throughout his life,
All of good I wish him that can henceforth befall him :
Ne'er, till my days are ended, will I ask the love of another,
or my lord will call him."

One of them then answered : “This warning Hartmut gives :
If nay shall be your answer, before three days, if he lives,
Against great Matelan castle you shall see him leading
All his knightly followers.” Smiles at this were the maiden’s
face o’erspreading.

Their leave they would be taking, and hasten on their way,
Those two great earls so haughty ; but Hilda bade them stay.
Altho’ she ne’er had known them, of gifts she was not chary ;
But yet they would not take them, for crafty men were they,
and in truth were wary.

At those sent there by Hartmut Hettel’s followers sneered,
And said, their scorn and anger they very little feared :
If to drink the wine of Hettel they were, in truth, unwilling,
Then this warning gave they : that they their cup with blood
would soon be filling.

When they had heard this answer, back to the shore they went
Whence they had been by Hartmut upon their errand sent.
He then ran forth to meet them, to ask how they were treated,
And what had them befallen, and how his courtship by Gu-drun
was greeted.

Then one of them thus answered : “This to us they said :
The high and queenly maiden a lover long has had,
For whom, beyond all others, love in her heart she is feeling :
If you will not taste their wine-cup, they soon will fill to you,
your life-blood spilling.”

But the men of brave King Hettel followed not her hest ;
They who the castle guarded thought to fight their best.
They bade that now their banners to the shafts be fastened ;
King Hettel's daring followers, to slay his foes, from out
the castle hastened.

Ludwig, Hartmut's father, the Norman king, was seen
From hardened rims of bucklers to strike a fiery sheen :
Truly, great was the bravery that now his heart was swelling ;
His friends and followers also, in the bloody game, were bold
beyond all telling.

When they who the castle guarded hoped for rest and peace,
Then their daring foemen did nearer to them press,
Led by him of Normandy : the youthful Hartmut's father
Grudged no toil to help him ; and this from that day's fight
one well might gather.

Now the trustful warders began in truth to mourn,
That they, 'gainst Hilda's bidding, had their care forborne, —
The best of the wife of Hettel, the high and worthy lady.
For this their shields were shattered, and many a life
was lost, in fight too ready.

Ludwig now and Hartmut on the field had met,
And, holding speech together, learned that, striving yet,
Queen Hilda's men were seeking the castle gates to fasten ;
Then, with shields before them, to bear their flags within
they all did hasten.

Rocks were hurled from the castle, and many spears were thrown,
But the foe it hurt but little, and his daring lessened none.
Little thought was given to the dead around them lying :
With heavy stones down beaten, many bold besiegers there
fell dying.

When Hartmut and King Ludwig came within the gate,
Many, badly wounded, from them their death-stroke met.
For this the lovely maiden began to sorrow sorely ;
Now in Hettel's castle the woe they wrought was growing
greater hourly.

Then the king of Normandy was glad enough, I ween,
When to the halls of Hettel he could lead his men,
Bearing well their weapons : soon his banner fluttered
Over the roof of the castle. Hilda at this her sorrow
loudly uttered.

Greatly do I wonder what might these guests befall,
Had now the grim old Wâ-te been there, and seen it all,
The while the men of Hartmut, with Ludwig, brave and daring,
Thro' the halls were rushing, and from her home the fair
Gu-drun were tearing.

Both Wâ-te and King Hettel, if to them that day
A warning had been given, would stoutly have barred the way ;
They their foemen's helmets with swords would so have riven
That back to their homes in Normandy, without Gu-drun, would
they have soon been driven.

Now within the castle were all in saddest mood ;
So men to-day might sorrow. Whate'er the foemen would,
There did they lay hands on, and took from out the dwelling.
Rich grew Hartmut's followers, — you well may trust that I
the truth am telling.

Then came the bold young Hartmut where he Gu-drun could see,
And said: "Most worthy lady, you erst looked down on me;
But now both I and my followers think of your kin so little,
We will not seize and hold them, but slay and hang them,
so the strife to settle."

Then said the maiden only: "Alas! O father mine,
Had you of this been knowing, that I, a child of thine,
One day from out your kingdom would thus by foes be stolen,
Never to me, poor maiden, such woe and sorry shame had here
befallen."

Then was the gold and clothing borne out by the robber band:
Forth they took Queen Hilda, led by her snow-white hand.
Matelan's goodly castle they would have burned up gladly;
For what became of the dwellers the Normans never cared, nor
thought of sadly.

But Hartmut now had bidden that it should not be burned.
To leave the land he hastened, and home again he turned,
Before 't was known to Hettel, who with his men was lying
Within the Waalisch marches, and there against his foe
his strength was trying.

"Leave your stolen booty!" to his men young Hartmut said;
"At home my father's riches will I give to you instead:
Thus o'er the watery pathway our sail will be the lighter."
To Gu-drun the hand of Ludwig brought a heavy wrong,
and woe full bitter.

They overthrew the castle, the town with fire they burned ;
From it the best was taken ; with wealth they homeward turned :
Two and sixty women thence with them they carried,
And many lovely maidens. With heartfelt woe was queenly
Hilda wearied.

How were they filled with sadness to leave the wine behind !
Now did the queenly mother a seat in the window find,
And looked upon her daughter, from home in sorrow turning.
Many a stately lady the Normans left in tears, and
bitterly mourning.

Weeping now and wailing was heard on either hand ;
No one there was happy, when from the father-land
The foe with Hilda's daughter and with her maidens hasted.
Many, now but children, for this, when men, to work them woe
ne'er rested.

Those who were seized by Hartmut down to the shore he took ;
All their lands were wasted ; their homes went up in smoke.
Now his hopes and wishes happily were granted :
Both Gu-drun and Hildeburg he with him carried off, —
the prize he wanted.

Well he knew that Hettel was many a league away,
And war was grimly waging ; no more would Hartmut stay.
Yet from the Hegeling kingdom no whit too fast he speeded,
For word was sent by Hilda to Hettel and his friends, that
much their help was needed.

How mournful were the tidings before the king she laid! —
That in his home and castle his knights were lying dead,
Or else were left by Hartmut now with death-wounds bleeding;
That foes had seized his daughter, and with her many maids
were homeward speeding.

She said: “Now tell King Hettel that I am here alone;
Evil hath me o’ertaken, and now, with pride o’ergrown,
Our mighty foeman, Ludwig, back to his land is faring;
A thousand men or better lie at our gates, and the pains
of death are bearing.”

Quickly then went Hartmut, and, ere three days were o’er,
On board his keels was ready; these the plunder bore,
As much as they could carry, whate’er his men had stolen.
The men of brave King Hettel were dazed and stunned by all
that had befallen.

What further did betide them, who in truth can tell?
Loud on the ear it sounded, as they shifted the flapping sail,
And away from the Hegeling kingdom, unto an isle forsaken,
They their barks were turning; the name of Wulpensand — or
shore of the wolves — it had taken.





Tale the Sixteenth.

HOW HILDA SENT TO HETTEL AND HERWIC TO ASK THEIR
HELP AGAINST HARTMUT.

THE fair and queenly Hilda, with all her will and mind,
Gave her thoughts now wholly trusty men to find
To bear the tale to Hettel. Her heart indeed was riven
By the wrongful deeds of Hartmut, and food for tears he
to her eyes had given.

To Herwic and her husband she bade that it be said
That foes had seized her daughter, that many knights lay dead ;
And she was left in wretchedness, lonely and forsaken ;
That all her gold and jewels the Normans on their way had
with them taken.

Quickly rode the heralds and through the land they went :
The queen in greatest sorrow these on their way had sent.
Upon the seventh morning, they came where they were greeted
With the sight of beleaguering Hegelings who before their
Moorland foes were seated.

Oft in knightly matches strove they every day,
And one might also hear them at many a game and play,
That they might not be weary who the siege were keeping ;
Some at a mark were shooting, and others strove in running
and in leaping.

When by the Danish Horant errand-bearers were seen
Who to the land were coming, thither sent by the queen,
Then said he unto Hettel : “ With news for us they ’re riding ;
May God in kindness grant it, no ill to those at home is now
betiding ! ”

The king himself went forward, and met them where they stood.
He said, with seemly bearing, to them in their sorry mood :
“ Brave knights, I give you welcome here to this far-off border.
How fares it with Queen Hilda ? Who sent you here ? and who
is left to guard her ? ”

Said one : “ Your lady sent us ; to you for help she turns :
Wasted are your castles ; your lands the foeman burns.
Gu-drun from thence is carried ; her maidens, too, are taken :
Never can your kingdom from all these woes and ills again
awaken.

“ This must I say, moreover, we are in straitest need ;
Now of your men and kindred a thousand there lie dead ;
And into far-off kingdoms have foes your riches carried ;
Your hoard of wealth is scattered : it shames good knights
that thus your lands are harried.”

The king then bade them tell him who these deeds had done.
One among them answered, and their names to him made known :
“Ludwig was one, the Norman ; with many knights he fought us ;
Hartmut, his son, was the other : ’t was they the inroad made,
and havoc wrought us.”

Then King Hettel answered : “To Hartmut I would not give,
For his bride, Gu-drun my daughter ; for this he now doth strive
To waste with war my kingdom. I know his lands are holden
Of Hagen, her mother’s father ; to woo her should his rank
not him embolden.

“To our beleaguered foemen we nought of this must tell,
And to our friends but whisper the ills that us befell ;
We then must call our kinsmen hither to be hasting.
Worse could never happen unto good knights at home,
from warfare resting.”

Herwic then was bidden to Hettel forthwith to go :
Hettel’s friends and kindred and his men were sent for, too.
When now these knights so worthy their way to him had taken,
They found their king and master dark in mind, and of
every hope forsaken.

Then said the lord of the Hegelings : “To you I make my moan ;
And, trusting in your friendship, my sorrows must I own :
The queen, my Lady Hilda, has sent to give us warning,
That the men of the Hegeling kingdom are ill bestead, and
bitterly are mourning.

“ My lands with fire are wasted, and my castle broken down ;
Ill our walls were guarded while we from home were gone :
Foes have seized my daughter ; my kin in death are sleeping ;
My trusty men are slaughtered to whom I left my land
and name in keeping.”

Herwic now was weeping, in his eyes the tear-drops stood ;
Wet were the eyes of Hettel, and fast they overflowed :
So it was with others, at seeing them thus weeping ;
Every one was sorrowful who, near the king, his faith to him
was keeping.

Then said the aged Wâ-te : “ Further of this say nought.
For all the woe and losses these friends to us have brought,
Soon will we repay them, and we shall yet be gladdened ;
Ludwig's kin and Hartmut's shall at our hands for this
erelong be saddened.”

Hettel asked in wonder : “ How can that be done ? ”
To him old Wâ-te answered : “ 'T is best that peace be won
Now with the king of Moorland, with whom we yet are warring ;
Our men, who here besiege him, to seek for fair Gu-drun we may
then be sparing.”

Wise was the aged Wâ-te, the words he spake were meet :
“ To-morrow morning early, let us with Siegfried treat ;
And we ought so to bear us that he shall well be knowing
That, should we not allow it, he with his men can ne'er
be homeward going.”

Then said the daring Herwie : “ Wâ-te has spoken right ;
To-day must you be thinking how, with the morrow's light,
You all before the foeman may show a warlike bearing :
It gives me pain that women should make us leave our siege,
and hence be faring.”

Then they got together horses and clothes with speed ;
Unto the words of Wâ-te they readily gave heed.
When the day was dawning, they again were striving
'Gainst those from Abakia. Great praise for this were all
to them soon giving.

On every side, with banners, they to the field did throng ;
Many, sound in body, there were slain erelong :
Wâ-te's men from Sturmland “ Nearer ! Nearer ! ” shouted ;
But those they would o'ermaster were quicker yet in fight,
and nought it booteth.

Soon the knightly Irold, over the edge of his shield,
Called out, “ Men of Moorland, to peace with us will you yield ?
King Hettel bids us ask you, will you this be choosing ?
Your lands so far are lying, that you your goods and men
will else be losing.”

Siegfried, lord of Moorland, answered to him thus :
“ Would you for peace have pledges, then win the fight o'er us ;
With no one will I bargain for aught my name may lessen :
If you think to overcome us, you will the more by this
your losses hasten.”

Then spake the knightly Fru-te : “ If help to us you ’ll give,
And pledge your word to do it, your stronghold you may leave
And go from my master’s kingdom, without more bloody fighting.”
The Moors from Karadia on this stretched forth the hand,
their faith thus plighting.

There came to strife a stand-still, this I for truth may say.
The glad and happy warriors met that selfsame day ;
Those who erst were foemen their help to each other granted.
They both had quenched their hatred ; to fight the Normans
now was all they wanted.

Then to Siegfried of Moorland at once King Hettel told
All the heavy tidings that he in his breast did hold ;
He pledged to him his friendship, so long as he was living,
If Hartmut’s foul misdoing now to repay, his help he would
be giving.

To him the lord of Alzabie, the Moorish Siegfried said :
“ Knew we where to find them, they should our coming dread.”
The aged Wâ-te answered : “ I can show you nearly
Their path across the water : and we perhaps on the sea
may meet them early.”

Then to them all spake Hettel : “ Where can ships be sought ?
And, if I wish to harm them, how bring my wish about ?
I might at home make ready within their lands to seek them,
And there, when I had found them, my anger for my wrongs
should quick o’ertake them.”

To him then said old Wâ-te : “ In this I can help you still ;
God is ever mighty to do whate’er he will.
I know within these borders now are lying near us
Well-made ships full seventy ; filled with food, these barks
from the sands will bear us.

“ In them have wandering pilgrims sailed the waters o’er :
Their ships, whatever happens, we must seize upon the shore ;
The pilgrims must be willing that on the sand we leave them,
Until our Norman foemen make good our wrongs, or we again
shall brave them.”

At once old Wâ-te started, no longer would he wait ;
A hundred knights went with him, the others lingered yet.
He said he came for buying ; what could the pilgrims sell him ?
For this men died thereafter, and, for himself, but sorry luck
befell him.

On the shore he found the pilgrims, — this I know is true, —
Fully thirty hundred, I ween, and better, too.
To fight were they unready, and could not rouse them quickly :
Nearer came King Hettel, and with him led his men,
now crowding thickly.

Their goods the pilgrims guarded, yet Wâ-te sent on shore
All that he had no need for, of silver and clothes a store ;
But the food was left on shipboard, so old Wâ-te chooses :
He said he should come hereafter, and would reward them well
for all their losses.

Sadly mourned the pilgrims, for sorest was their need ;
But for all they said old Wâ-te cared not a crust of bread :
The bold, unyielding warrior, stern and never smiling,
Said : “ Both ships and flatboats they to leave to him
must now be willing.”

Hettel recked but little if ever they sailed again
Over the sea with their crosses : then he took of their men
Five hundred at least, or over, the best they had among them ;
Of these to the Hegeling kingdom few came back, from the death
that overhung them.

I know not whether Hettel atoned for his evil deed
Done to these poor pilgrims, that made their hearts to bleed,
And, in a far-off kingdom, rent their band, to their sorrow.
I ween the God in heaven saw the wrong, and his anger showed
on the morrow.

King Hettel and his followers met with a kindly breeze,
And now their way were taking quickly across the seas ;
Seeking for their foemen, they sailed far over the water,
Wherever they might find them, longing to show their wrath,
and bent on slaughter.





Tale the SeVENTeenth.

HOW HETTEL CAME TO THE WULPENSAND IN SEARCH OF
HIS DAUGHTER.

LUDWIG, king of the Normans, and Hartmut, too, his son,
Now, with all their followers, far away had gone,
And on a lone, wild seashore, after their toil, were resting.
Though many there were gathered, yet little happiness they then
were tasting.

'T was on a broad, low island, hight the Wulpensand,
That now the brave King Ludwig, and they of the Norman land,
Shelter for men and horses had found unto their liking ;
But a doom to them most woful ere long must come, instead of
the rest they were seeking.

The very high-born maidens, torn from the Hegeling land,
Had been led out, and wandered along the barren sand ;
So far as 't was allowed them to show their feelings freely,
They who had been stolen in sadness wept before the foeman
daily.

Fires upon the seashore were seen on every side ;
The men from far-off Normandy were thinking there to abide.
Gladly with the maidens would they seven days have rested,
And there have made them lodgings ; but every hope of this
ere long was blasted.

While on this isle forsaken Hartmut now must stay,
Loth were he and his followers the hope to put away,
Which till now they fostered, that they for rest might tarry
Throughout a week in the shelter whither they the maidens
fair did carry.

It was from far-off Matelan that Ludwig and his band
The fair Gu-drun had taken unto this lonely strand ;
Nor felt they now uneasy lest to their hidden dwelling
Wâ-te them should follow, and never harm from him
were they foretelling.

Now saw King Ludwig's sailors, tossing on the wave,
A ship with sails the richest. To the king they warning gave ;
But when 't was seen by Hartmut, and others with him standing,
That on the sails were crosses, they said these must be
pilgrims, bent on landing.

On the waters floating three good ships were seen,
With new and well-made flatboats ; they bore across the main
Those who on their clothing never yet wore crosses,
Their love to God thus showing. The Normans must from them
meet heavy losses.

As they the shore were nearing, one on the ships might see
Helmets brightly shining. No more from care were free
King Ludwig and his kinsmen, and harm their fears foreboded :
“ Look there ! ” then shouted Hartmut ; “ with grimmest foes of
mine these ships are loaded.”

The ships were turned so quickly that now men loudly heard
Rudders strained and cracking, held by those who steered.
Both the young and aged, who on the sea-sands rested,
Were indeed bewildered when to spring on shore the foeman
hasted.

Ludwig and young Hartmut their shields in hand now bore.
For them it had been easier to reach their homes once more
If they had not too freely their rest on the island taken :
They had falsely reckoned that Hettel had now no friends,
and was all forsaken.

Ludwig called out loudly to all his trusty men,
(He thought it child's play only that he before had seen,)
“ Now with worthy foemen must I, at length, be striving !
He shall be the richer who 'neath my flag his help to me
is giving.”

Soon was Hartmut's banner raised upon the shore.
The ships had now come nearer ; with spears the Normans bore
To reach the foe were easy from where they now were waiting :
I ween the aged Wâ-te was ready with his shield, the foeman
meeting.

Ne'er before so grimly did champions guard their land.
Boldly the Hegeling warriors nearer pressed to the strand ;
Soon they met the Normans with sword and spear, undaunted ;
Blows they freely bartered : such bargains cheaply given
no more they wanted.

Everywhere the Hegelings sprang upon the shore.
After a wind from the hill-tops was never seen before
Snow so thickly whirling as spears from hands that threw them :
Though they had done it gladly idle it were to shun the strokes
that slew them.

Thick fly the spears on both sides : the time but slowly goes,
Till they on the beach are standing. Quickly on his foes
Sprang the aged Wâ-te, just as they were nearing ;
His mood was of the grimmest, and soon they saw what mind
he now was bearing.

Ludwig, king of the Normans, then at Wâ-te ran,
And hurled a spear well sharpened against the brave old man.
The shaft, in splinters shattered, high thro' air went crashing,
For Ludwig drove it bravely ; soon to the fight came Wâ-te's
kinsmen dashing.

With a heavy stroke, old Wâ-te Ludwig's helmet cut ;
The edge of the sword he wielded the head of his foeman smote,
Who beneath his breastplate a shirt of silk was wearing ;
(In Abalie 't was woven ;) were it not for this, his end he must
be nearing.

Hardly from him could Ludwig with life and limb go free ;
The spot he would fain be leaving, for Wâ-te was ill to see
When he was roused to anger, and to win the day was trying :
Struck by his hand were many, who, brave in warfare, now
on the field lay dying.

Irold and young Hartmut each on the other sprang :
On either side their weapons on the foeman's helmet rang ;
Throughout the throng of fighters, all could hear it loudly ;
For bold in war was Irold, and Hartmut, too, was brave, and
bore him proudly.

Herwic from the Sealands, a warrior strong and good,
Could not reach the landing, but leaped into the flood,
And in the waves was standing, up to his shoulders hidden.
Soon to his cost was he learning how hard a task it is
to win a maiden.

They the shore who guarded their foemen thought to drown
While in the waters struggling. Shafts at them were thrown,
And many on them broken ; but they, their foes now seeking,
Soon the sands were treading, and many a knight his wrath
on them was wreaking.

Ere they had reached the shoreland, one saw the watery flood
Dyed by the killed and wounded, in hue as red as blood ;
Everywhere, so widely the reddened waves were flowing,
One could not shoot beyond them, how far soe'er he might
his spear be throwing.

Heavier toil and losses heroes never found,
And never so many warriors lay trampled on the ground :
Enough were they for a kingdom who lay, unwounded, dying.
The Normans who o'erthrew them, on all sides too, I ween, in
death were lying.

It was to save his daughter that there King Hettel fought,
And all his kinsmen with him. On every side were wrought,
By him and those who helped him, havoc and bitter sorrow.
Dead on the Wulpensand were many bodies found before
the morrow.

Unto their lords all faithful, they strove upon the sand, —
Alike the men of Normandy and they of the Hegeling land.
Warriors brave from Denmark fought with matchless daring ;
He ne'er should wait their onset who much for his welfare
or his life was caring.

Morunc and with him Ortwin boldly held their ground,
And for themselves won honor ; nowhere could be found
Men who greater slaughter wrought, with hearts undaunted :
The heroes twain, with their followers, gave full many wounds,
with spears well planted.

Proudly the men from Moorland, as I have heard it said,
When from their ships they landed, the way to the foemen led.
Hettel hoped, in his struggle, help from them to be gaining,
For they were daring fighters : one saw the blood beneath
their helmets raining.

How could he who led them have braver or bolder been?
That day he dimmed with life-blood many breastplates' sheen;
Siegfried it was, unyielding in storm of battle ever.
How could the Danish Fru-te, or even Wâ-te the old, have
shown them braver?

Thickly hurled were lances, hither and thither thrown:
Ortwin, with his followers, in hopeful mood came on;
Helmets that day he shattered, blows upon them dealing.
Gu-drun was bitterly weeping: her women, too, were deepest
sorrow feeling.

The strife, on both sides, lasted throughout the livelong day;
Longing to reach each other, they crowded to the fray.
There to knights and warriors must the fight go badly,
Where the friends of Hettel to win his daughter back
were striving gladly.

The evening sun sank lower; and for King Hettel now
His losses grew the greater. King Ludwig's men, I trow,
Did their best in fighting, but could not flee the slaughter;
Their foes they wounded deeply, and guarded thus Gu-drun
from those who sought her.

The strife began at morning; by night alone 't was stopped,
And steadily had lasted; they ne'er their weapons dropped.
The old and young together gained no shame in fighting.
Now the brave King Hettel forward pressed, the king
of the Normans meeting.



Tale the Eighteenth.

HOW LUDWIG SLEW HETTEL, AND STOLE AWAY IN THE
NIGHT.

HIGH in hand their weapons Hettel and Ludwig bore, —
Well had they been sharpened. Soon each knew the more
Who was now his foeman, such strength they both were showing.
Ludwig slew King Hettel ; and out of this our mournful tale
is growing.

When the lord of Matelan upon the field lay slain,
Soon 't was told to his daughter : loudly then began
Gu-drun to mourn her father, so did many a maiden ;
Not one could stop her wailing : friends and foes alike
were sorrow-laden.

Soon as the grim old Wâ-te the death of the king did know,
He cried and roared in anger. Like to the evening glow,
Now were helmets blazing, beneath the strokes quick given
By him and all his followers, who by their loss were unto
madness driven.

However hard their fighting, how could it bring them good ?
Drenched was all the island with many knights' hot blood.
Not yet the Hegeling warriors to think of peace were ready ;
Away from the Wulpensand they only wished to bring Gu-drun,
their lady.

In stormy fight the Waal men bewreked the death of the king ;
To many a fighting Ortlander and hard-pressed Hegeling
Those who came from Denmark of friendship gave a token :
Soon these knights so daring found in their hands their
trusty weapons broken.

Now to avenge his father Ortwin bravely strove :
Faithful to him did Horant and all his followers prove.
Night the field had darkened, the light of day was failing ;
Then were given to many wounds from which the life-blood
fast was welling.

Soon, in the dark, on Horant a Danish follower sprang ;
The sword that he was holding loud on the armor rang :
Thinking he was a foeman, Horant at once upon him
Wrought most bitter sorrow : a deadly wound by that warrior
brave was done him.

When Horant saw that his kinsman beneath his blow lay dead,
Then he bade that his banner be borne with his own o'erhead.
The voice of him who was dying told whose life he had taken
With his hand so rashly ; sorely he mourned the friend
who never would waken.

Loudly called out Herwic : “ Murder here is done !
Since we can see no longer, and daylight now is gone,
We all shall kill each other, friends and foes together.
If this shall last till morning, two may be left to fight,
but not another.”

Where'er they saw old Wâ-te on the stormy fighting-ground,
No one there was willing near him to be found ;
No welcome, in his madness, was he to any giving :
Many a foe he wounded, and laid on the spot that he would
ne'er be leaving.

'T was well the foes were sundered until the break of day ;
On either side the foemen near each other lay,
Wounded to death or slaughtered. Fast the light was waning,
Not yet the moon was risen, and the Hegeling foe the field
were nowhere gaining.

The warriors grim, unwillingly, to the strife now put a stop ;
The hands of all were weary ere they gave the struggle up :
But, when the fight was over, they near each other loitered.
Wherever fires were burning, for each the other's shields
and helmets glittered.

Ludwig then and Hartmut, lords of the Norman land,
Talked aside together. Then to his faithful band
Spake the elder warrior : “ Why be longer staying
So near the brave old Wâ-te, who all of us is madly
bent on slaying ? ”

The wily king then bade them : “ Lie low, and be not seen,
With your heads upon your bucklers : you then must make a din ;
And so the men of the Hegelings my plan will not be knowing, —
That, if I now can do it, I with you all may hence
unseen be going.”

Ludwig's men and kinsmen did as he had said :
They upon their sackbuts and trumpets loudly played,
As if they, by their prowess, the land had gained them wholly.
Ludwig now to his followers showed his crafty plot
and cunning fully.

Then were heard, on all sides, mingled shouts and cries ;
But wailing from the maidens was not allowed to rise :
All who would not stop it were threatened death by drowning, —
To be sunk beneath the waters, — if they were sobbing heard,
or loudly moaning.

Whate'er was owned by the Normans now to the ships was ta'en ;
The dead were there left lying, e'en where they were slain.
Friends were lost to many who, seeking, could not find them :
So few there were still living, that many an empty ship
was left behind them.

Thus unbeknown and slyly, sailed away o'er the main
The men of the land of Normandy ; great was the women's pain
From kinsfolk to be sundered, and yet to hush their weeping.
Of this the men knew nothing who now upon the Wulpensand
were sleeping.

Before the day was dawning, well were on their way
They whom the Danish warriors had thought that morn to slay.
Then Wâ-te bade that loudly his war-horn should be sounded ;
He was in haste to follow, and hoped ere long to fell them,
deeply wounded.

On foot and on their horses, the men of the Hegeling land
All were seen together, flocking o'er the sand,
To fight the fleeing Normans; never in this they rested.
Ludwig with his followers already far upon their way
had hasted.

Many ships lay empty, and clothing there was found ;
All about the Wulpensand 't was scattered o'er the ground ;
Many weapons also were seen, with none to bear them.
They had overslept their going, and never to harm their foes
could they come near them.

When this was told to Wâ-te, with anger he was torn :
How for the death of Hettel he bitterly did mourn !
And that on Ludwig's body his wrath he was not wreaking !
Helmets there lay shattered ; for this must many a woman's
heart be aching.

How gloomily and sadly now, in angry mood,
Ortwin was bemoaning the loss of his warriors good !
He said : “ Rouse up, my fighters ! we may perhaps o’ertake them
Before they leave these waters ; not far from shore we yet
in flight may check them.”

Willingly old Wâ-te would his bidding do :
Fru-te the winds was watching, to learn which way they blew.
Then said he to his kinsmen: "What helps it though we hasten?
Mark what now I tell you: the thirty miles they've gained
we ne'er can lessen.

"Moreover, we of fighters have not here enough
That we in aught can harm them, e'en should we now set off :
Scorn me not," said Fru-te, "and to my words give heeding;
What more to say is needful? Your foes you cannot reach,
howe'er you're speeding.

"Bid that now the wounded upon the ships be laid ;
Then on the field of battle let search for the dead be made,
And bid that they be buried upon this strand forsaken,
So friends may rest together ; this good at least from them
should not be taken."

All, standing there together, wringing their hands were seen.
For this one sorrow only, would their lot have hapless been, —
To lose the youthful maiden, Hilda's lovely daughter.
How, when they saw her mother, if home they went, could news
so sad be brought her?

Then to them said Morunc: "Would there were nothing more,
Beyond our own sad losses, for which our hearts are sore !
Small reward will be given for the news we home shall carry,
That Hettel dead is lying: far from Hilda fain would I
longer tarry."

Then went the warriors searching for the dead upon the sand.
Those they knew were Christians who lay upon the strand,
As the Sturmisch Wâ-te bade them, were all together carried ;
Then both the old and the younger chose a spot whereon
the dead were buried.

Then said the knight, young Ortwin : “ Let us bury them here ;
And thought must we be taking to build a church full near,
That they be not forgotten, while this their end is showing.
For it shall all their kinsmen give of their wealth, each one
his share bestowing.”

Then spake the Sturmisch Wâ-te : “ In this thou well hast said ;
We now should sell the horses and the clothing of the dead,
Who on the shore are lying ; so, since their life is ended,
Shall many poor and needy, with the wealth they left,
be holpen and befriended.”

Then asked the warrior Irold, if foes who there lay dead
Should also now be buried, or if wolves should on them feed,
And hungry ravens tear them, that round their bodies hovered ?
Then to the wise they listened ; none of the dead were left
on the field uncovered.

When now the fight was over, and all were free from care,
Hettel, their king, they buried, who for his daughter dear,
Upon this barren seashore, e'en unto death had striven.
To others who had fallen, whate'er their land and name,
was burial given.

First, the men from Moorland each by himself they laid ;
The same was done for the Hegelings found among the dead ;
Unto the Normans, also, gave they graves allotted :
Alone was each one buried, if Christian he were or heathen,
it nothing bootied.

Until six days were over, busy were they, at their best,
And never time were finding (for the warriors took no rest)
To ask for dead and dying the grace of God in heaven,
For sins of which they were guilty ; that they for their
misdeeds should be forgiven.

Saying mass and singing were later heard on the strand.
Never was God so worshipped, in any other land,
For the dead in stormy fighting. Wherever men were lying
With their death-wounds smitten, holy priests they brought
to shrive the dying.

Many there did tarry to care for the churchly men.
A deed of gift was written, wherein it could be seen
How of land to the brothers three hundred hides was given.
Far and wide 't was bruited, that well a godly house was
buildied, and had thriven.

All who there were mourning the loss of friends and kin
Gave of their wealth a tithing, women as well as men,
For weal of the souls of any whose bodies there lay buried.
The cloister soon was wealthy, by the yield of three hundred
hides, through toil unwearied.

Now may God in his keeping have those who there lie dead,
And the holy men there dwelling. Those then homeward sped
Who still upon the Wulpensand were left among the living;
After all their sorrows, they reached their fatherland,
no more in warfare striving.





Tale the Nineteenth.

HOW THE HEGELINGS WENT HOME TO THEIR OWN LAND

THE kinsmen of King Hettel upon the sands had left
Many in death's fast keeping; never knights bereft
Their homeward way had taken, hearts so sorry bringing.
Thereafter lovely women for this, with weeping eyes,
their hands were wringing.

Ortwin, the knight of Ortland, who to the fight had come,
After such shame and losses, back to fair Hilda's home
Feared to bring these tidings, his mother dear to sadden.
She there was waiting daily, hoping her men would bring
Gu-drun the maiden.

Wâ-te, fearing sorely, rode to Hilda's land;
The others dared not tell her of the loss on the Wulpensand.
Ill in the storm of fighting, his strength her men had warded;
Not lightly her forgiveness he hoped to gain, who thus her
lord had guarded.

When the word was spoken that Wâ-te near had come,
At once were men faint-hearted. Erewhiles when he came home,
Back from the war-field riding, it was with war-horns braying.
This he did at all times ; but now they all were still, and
nought were saying.

“ Woe ’s me ! ” said Lady Hilda, “ what sorrows must we fear ?
The men of the aged Wâ-te shattered shields now bear ;
Slowly step the horses, with armor heavy-loaded.
Some evil has befallen. Oh ! say what harm to the king
is now forboded ? ”

When thus the queen had spoken, but little time had passed
Ere to the aged Wâ-te crowds came up in haste,
Who of friends and kinsfolk tidings now were seeking.
Soon a tale he told them with which the hearts of all were
well-nigh breaking.

Thus spake the Sturmisich Wâ-te : “ Your loss I may not hide,
Nor falsehood will I tell you ; all in the fight have died.”
The young and old together at this with fear were stricken.
Ne’er was a throng more wretched ; no other woes could one
to theirs e’er liken.

“ Alas ! my bitter sorrow ! ” said King Hettel’s wife.
“ From me my lord is sundered, who there laid down his life,
The great and mighty Hettel ! My pride, how is it fallen !
Lost are child and husband ! Gu-drun I ne’er shall see,
from me forever stolen.”

Then both knights and maidens with sharpest woe were torn ;
Their sorrow knew no healing. Loudly the queen forlorn
Was heard, throughout the palace, for her husband mourning.
“ Ah, wretched me,” cried Hilda, “ that now to Hartmut’s side
the luck is turning !”

Then spake the brave old Wâ-te : “ My lady, end your moan :
Home are they coming never, but when to men are grown
The youths within our kingdom, sad days will have an ending ;
To Ludwig and to Hartmut the like we ’ll do, our wrath
upon them spending.”

Then quoth the weeping lady : “ Alas, that I must live !
Whatever I am owning I would most gladly give
Could e’er my wrongs be righted. If but this were granted,
That I, poor God-forsaken, might see Gu-drun again,
naught else were wanted.”

Old Wâ-te spake to Hilda : “ Lady, weep no more.
’Tis best that we be sending, before twelve days are o’er,
To gather all your warriors, who will help you gladly
To plan a raid on the foeman ; so with the Norman will it yet
go badly.”

He said : “ My Lady Hilda, list to what befell :
Erewhile I took from pilgrims nine ships, and then set sail :
These should again be given to those we ill have treated ;
That when new strifes we’re waging, a better luck to us may
then be meted.”

The weeping Hilda answered : “ ’T is best that this be done ;
Ever is it fitting that men for misdeeds atone.
To steal the goods of pilgrims is a sin not lightly shriven :
For every mark we ’ve taken, to them three marks of silver
shall be given.”

The ships were brought to the pilgrims, as the queen did say ;
Not one there was among them, when they sailed away,
Who left a curse behind him. For wrongs they found a healing ;
And for Hilda, Hagen’s daughter, they harbored, when they left,
no bitter feeling.

Upon the morrow early, thither to come was seen
Herwic, the lord of Sealand ; soon he found the queen
Weeping for her husband, who in death was lying.
She gave the knight a welcome, with hands she ever wrung, and
deeply sighing.

Seeing the lady weeping, then, too, to weep began
The young and lordly Herwic ; soon spake that well-born man :
“ Their lives not all have given, who help to you are owing,
And who would gladly grant it ; though many by their death
their love were showing.

“ My arm shall never falter, nor heart from care be free,
Till Hartmut feels my anger, who stole the maid from me,
And dared from home to tear her, death to many dealing :
Soon will I ride to his borders ; then will I seize and hold
his lands and dwelling.”

His men, though filled with sorrow, rode towards the town,
Flocking to Matelan castle. The queen her hope made known
That, whatsoe'er might happen, their fealty would not weaken ;
And, though the worst befell them, that she by them would never
be forsaken.

To her the men from Friesland and those from Sturmland went,
And from the Danish kingdom were warriors likewise sent ;
The knights of Morunc also, from the land of Wâleis riding,
Thither came with the Hegelings, to where the fair Queen Hilda
was abiding.

Forthwith there came from Ortland, Ortwin, Hilda's son ;
Then mourned they, as was fitting, his father dead and gone.
Soon were all the warriors aside with their ladies speaking,
And talking of the inroad the fighters strong one day
would thence be making.

Then said the aged Wâ-te : " This can never be
Till those who now are children fully-grown we see,
And worthy to be swordsmen. Then, their fathers mourning,
And of their kinsmen mindful, gladly will they with us
to war be turning."

Queen Hilda then made answer : " To wait for this were long ;
Meanwhile Gu-drun, my daughter, held by foemen strong,
Must in a far-off kingdom be kept in bondage bitter ;
And I, poor queen and mother, shall know no bliss, and my heart
will ne'er grow lighter."

Then said the Danish Fru-te : “ The maid we cannot free
Until once more your kingdom shall full of warriors be.
Then, for the struggle ready, we hence shall ride, unfearing ;
And so upon our foemen shall work the greatest ill with blows
unsparing.”

To this Queen Hilda answered : “ That day may God soon give ;
But I, unhappy woman, a weary life must live.
Whoe’er of me is mindful, and of Gu-drun, poor maiden,
Him will I trust most fully, knowing his heart for us with care
is laden.”

They now their leave were taking ; to them the lady spake :
“ May he be blest and happy who thought for me shall take.
'T is right that you, brave warriors, to fight for me are ready ;
Meanwhile for the coming inroad do all you can, and therein
be you speedy.”

Wisely then spake Wâ-te, the warrior old and good :
“ Lady, we should be felling trees in the western wood.
Since we to fight have chosen, our hopes upon it staking,
The men of every principedom should forty well-built ships
for us be making.”

“ I too will bid,” quoth Hilda, “ that near the deep sea-flood
Twenty ships be builded, strong, and firm, and good ;
And have them fully ready — my hest shall well be heeded —
To bear my friends and kindred to where they for the fight
will soon be needed.”

Siegfried, lord of Moorland, while their leave they took,
With kind and seemly bearing, thus to the women spoke :
“ You have to tell me only when our time to wait is ending ;
To sail shall I be ready, nor need you then for me
be further sending.”

Then to the sorrowing women, before they spread the sail,
The friendly guests, now leaving, bade a kind farewell.
The hearts of knights and maidens deep in woe were sinking ;
Yet warlike deeds they plotted of which their Norman foes
were never thinking.

When they at length had ridden back again to their land,
Sadly they mourned their losses : then to the Wulpensand,
For the sake of the dead, did Hilda bid that food be taken
To the priests for them there praying. The queen was wise,
the dead were not forsaken.

There she bade to be builded a minster fair and wide ;
A house for the sick, and a cloister built they at its side,
Near where the slain were buried. In many a land one heareth
Its name, and of those there fallen : ‘ The church of Wulpensand ’
is the name it beareth.





Tale the Twentieth.

HOW HARTMUT WENT HOME TO NORMANDY.

NO further will we tell you of how with these it fared,
Or how the cloister-brothers their life together shared.
Now to the tale of Hartmut we ask you all to listen ;
How he with many maidens, high-born and fair, unto his land
did hasten.

After the fight was ended, as I have told before,
For many there was sorrow for the bitter wounds they bore :
Many who had fallen on the stormy field lay dying ;
Children bereft of fathers bewailed them soon with tears
they ne'er were drying.

With heavy hearts the Normans were wafted o'er the flood ;
Every night and morning many a warrior good
Felt ashamed and sorry, thus from the sands to be driven ;
So felt the old and the youthful, although in all things else
they well had thriven.

They came to the Norman borders, unto King Ludwig's land.
It was a day of gladness to all the sailing band,
To see at last their homesteads and thither to be steering.
Then said one among them : " These are Hartmut's towns that we
are nearing."

Helped by kindly breezes, soon they reached the shore.
Now the men of Normandy happy hearts all bore,
When to their wives and children they again were coming ;
Long had they been fearing that they must die, while they
afar were roaming.

When now the glad King Ludwig did on his castles look,
Thus the lordly Norman to Gu-drun, the maiden, spoke :
" See you that palace, Lady ? In bliss you may there be living ;
If you to us are kindly, our richest lands will we to you
be giving."

Then the high-born maiden thus made her sorrow known :
" To whom should I feel kindly, when kindness none have shown ?
From that, alas ! I'm sundered, and in my hopes am thwarted ;
Nothing I know but hardship, and all my weary days
I spend sad-hearted."

Then answered her King Ludwig : " Throw off this sorry mood,
And give your love to Hartmut, a knight both brave and good.
Whatever we are owing to give you we are willing ;
With one who is so worthy blest may you live, and lofty rank
be filling."

Then spake Hilda's daughter: "Why leave me not in peace?
Rather than wed with Hartmut death would I dread far less.
That he should be my lover by birth he is not fitted;
To lose my life were better than take his love and as
his bride be greeted."

When this was heard by Ludwig, filled with wrath was he;
Quick by the hair he seized her, and flung her into the sea.
Straightway the daring Hartmut his ready help then gave her;
He sprang at once to the maiden, and from the whirling waves
his arm did save her.

Just as the maid was sinking Hartmut reached her side;
Had not her lover helped her drowned were she in the tide.
Her yellow locks well grasping, then from out the water
With his hands he drew her: else nought from death had spared
Queen Hilda's daughter.

Back to the ship did Hartmut bring the maiden fair;—
Rough ways to lovely women Ludwig did not spare.
Dragged from out the water, she in her smock was seated;
How full was she of sadness! Never before had the maiden
thus been treated.

Then all her friends together wept for the lovely maid,
None could there be happy; for what could be more sad
Than to see the king's own daughter handled thus so roughly?
The thought to them was rising: "To us they now will bear
themselves more gruffly."

Then said the knightly Hartmut: "Why drown my hoped-for wife,
Gu-drun, the lovely maiden, dear to me as life?
If any but my father so foul a wrong had done her,
Sore would be my anger, and I from him would take both
life and honor."

To him King Ludwig answered: "Ever free from shame
Have I till age been living, and still a worthy name
And rank among my fellows will hold till life is ending.
Bid now Gu-drun, your lady, that she no more her scorn on me
be spending."

Now unto Queen Gerlind errand-bearers came,
Who, in mood most happy, bore in Hartmut's name
Words of love and honor, as from her son was fitting.
He asked a friendly welcome for his many knights who on the
shore were waiting.

They bore from him the tidings that he across the wave
Had brought the Hegeling maiden, to whom his love he gave
Ere he had looked upon her, and for whom he still was pining.
When this was heard by Gerlind, a happier day on her
was never shining.

Then said he who told it: "Lady, you now should ride
To the sea before the castle, where yet the maid doth bide,
And give her, in her sorrow, your love and kindly greeting;
You and your daughter, Ortrun, should haste to the shore,
the homeless maiden meeting.

“Likewise, riding with you down unto the flood,
Should go both maids and women, and also warriors good.
Her you will find in the harbor who from home was riven;
Both to the maid and her followers a welcome kind by you
should now be given.”

Then Queen Gerlind answered: “That will I gladly do;
'T will make me richly happy King Hettel's child to know,
And to find that, with her maidens, she has come to tarry.
Well I know that Hartmut will soon be blest, when he the maid
shall marry.”

Then she bade that horses, with saddle-cloths, be brought.
Ortrun, the youthful princess, was happy in the thought
Soon in her father's kingdom to see Gu-drun, the maiden,
If this might truly happen; for the speech of all was with
her praises laden.

Then out of chests were taken of all the clothes the best
They knew therein were lying, to be worn to meet the guest.
Soon the knights of Hartmut to don the clothes were bidden;
Erelong a throng of followers, gaily bedight, from Gerlind's
halls had ridden.

Upon the third day early, women as well as men,
All who there had gathered before Gerlind, their queen,
To give the maidens welcome, were ready and outfitted;
Out of the gates they crowded, and on their steeds not long
in the court-yard waited.

The Normans now with the women had into the harbor come :
The booty they unloaded that they would carry home.
All unto their birthland back had come right gladly ;
Gu-drun and her band of maidens, alone of all, demeaned
themselves but sadly.

Now the brave Sir Hartmut led her forth by the hand.
If she had deemed it fitting, this she had not deigned ;
Yet the poor child, in sorrow, took his love but coldly,
Altho' he showed it warmly, and worship more had done
freely and boldly.

With her went sixty maidens who over the sea had come :
One saw, as he beheld them, how that all from their home
Came with proudest bearing. They erst high rank had taken,
In other lands and kingdoms ; their hearts were heavy now,
of bliss forsaken.

The sister of young Hartmut between two barons rode ;
Now to Hilda's daughter a welcome warm she showed :
Ortrun, Ludwig's daughter, her eyes now wet with weeping,
Kissed the homeless maiden, while she her fair white hands
in her own was keeping.

Then the wife of Ludwig to kiss her, too, was fain,
But to the youthful maiden the thought was full of pain.
Thus she spake to Gerlind : " Why come you here to meet me ?
Loath am I to kiss you, and neither can I bear that you
should greet me.

“ ’T was by your own ill-doing that I, poor wretched maid,
Have known no home nor dwelling ; heart-sorrow long I ’ve had ;
My lot, alas ! is shameful, and will, I fear, grow harder.”
Then Ortrun strove to soothe her, and did her best that with
love Gu-drun should reward her.

One by one she greeted the maids on every side.
Now rose a wondrous shouting ; men flocked from far and wide :
Upon the pebbly sea-beach stakes for tents were driven ;
With silken ropes were they fastened ; to Hartmut and his men
was shelter in them given.

To bear the goods from the seaside the folk were all astir.
Gu-drun, fair maiden, sorrowed, and pain it gave to her
To see that all around her the Normans were so many ;
Unless it were to Ortrun, she never showed a friendly mood
to any.

The maidens on the seashore must all the day abide.
With tears their eyes were flowing, whatever others did ;
Dry were they but seldom, their cheeks were pale with sorrow :
Hartmut tried to soothe them, but their sadness lasted yet
through many a morrow.

To hold Gu-drun in honor was Ortrun ever stern,
And, e’en if others wronged her, with love to her did turn :
She in her father’s kingdom strove to make her merry,
But, far from friends and kindred, often the poor young girl
was sad and weary.

To the Normans home was welcome, as indeed was right ;
They boasted much of the booty, both churl as well as knight,
Brought from the Hegeling kingdom, as they home were turning.
What welcome glad all gave them who ne'er to see them hoped,
albeit yearning !

Soon as Hartmut's warriors from all their toil were free,
And they were fully rested from off the stormy sea,
They quickly left each other, for their homes in many places :
While some their hands were wringing, smiles were seen to
brighten others' faces.

Then did Hartmut also turn away from the shore,
And to a stately palace the fair Gu-drun he bore.
Henceforth the youthful maiden must tarry there far longer
Than she to stay was minded, and there her woe and pain
grew ever stronger.

When now the high-born maiden sat in Hartmut's hall,
Where his men should crown her, then he bade them all
To be forever faithful, and their goodwill to show her ;
So would she not forget them, but would enrich whoe'er
should kindness do her.

Then spake the mother, Gerlind, old King Ludwig's wife :
“ When will Gu-drun be ready to share young Hartmut's life,
Our youthful prince so noble, and in her arms to fold him ?
Of her his rank is worthy, and ne'er will she be sorry
for her lord to hold him.”

Gu-drun to this had listened, the wretched, homeless maid ;
She said : " My Lady Gerlind, 't would make you sad indeed
If you must take in wedlock one who the lives had wasted
Of many friends and kinsfolk ; by toil for him your life were
ever blasted."

" This shall no one hinder," to her then said the queen ;
" Gainsay his will no longer, let your love for him be seen,
And on my head I pledge you that rich shall be your guerdon :
If to be a queen you spurn not, you of my crown shall bear the
happy burden."

Then said the sorrowing maiden : " That will I never wear ;
Of all his wealth and greatness you the tale may spare.
Your son, the knightly Hartmut, my love can ne'er be winning :
Unwilling here I linger, and hence to go I day by day
am pining."

Then the youthful Hartmut, who of the land was lord,
Was angry with the maiden when he her answer heard.
He said : " If, then, to wed her the lady granteth never,
So, also, to the fair one shall my goodwill and love
be wanting ever."

Then the wicked Gerlind to Hartmut said, in turn :
" Ever the young and thoughtless from the wise should learn.
Now leave to me this maiden, let me for her be caring,
And I so well shall teach her that she will quickly drop
her lofty bearing."

“That will I grant you gladly,” Hartmut answering said ;
“Whate’er from this may follow, to you I give the maid,
To have in your good keeping, as suits her rank and honor ;
The maid is sad and homeless ; lady, ’t is right that kindly
care be shown her.”

So Gu-drun, the fair one, when Hartmut went that day,
Was left unto his mother, and given to her sway :
But Hilda’s youthful daughter Gerlind’s guidance hated ;
She could not brook her teaching, and never her dislike
for this abated.

Then to the lovely maiden the old she-devil spake :
“If you will not live happy, then sorrow you must take.
You have to heat my chamber ; yourself the fire must kindle ;
See, there is none to help you, nor may you hope your toil
will ever dwindle.”

The high-born maiden answered : “That I well can do ;
Whatever you shall bid me, in all must I yield to you,
Until the God in heaven at last my wrongs has righted.
Never my mother’s daughter the fire upon the hearth ere this
has lighted.”

Said Gerlind : “As I ’m living, to toil must you begin,
As never queenly daughter to do before was seen.
To be so proud and headstrong I will make you weary :
Before to-morrow darkens, your maidens you must leave,
and ne’er be merry.

“ You hold yourself too highly, as I have heard it said ;
For this shall work most toilsome soon upon you be laid.
This pride and froward bearing must be by you forsaken ;
Your lofty mood will I lower, and all your hopes will very
quickly weaken.”

Then went the wicked Gerlind to court, in anger wild ;
She said to her son, young Hartmut : “ Hettel’s wilful child
Scorns both you and your kindred, and ever at us is sneering :
Would we had never seen her ; if we such talk from her
must now be hearing.”

Then spake unto his mother Hartmut, the knight so brave :
“ Pray treat the maiden kindly, howe’er she may behave :
So, for the care you show her, my thanks will you be earning.
Greatly have I wronged her ; it well may be that she my love
is spurning.”

Then said to him old Gerlind : “ Whate’er by us is done,
In mood she is so stubborn that she will yield to none.
Unless we treat her harshly she ne’er, as you would have her,
Will come to you in wedlock ; this must we do, or else
to herself must leave her.”

Then to her thus answered the worthy Norman knight :
“ Good lady, show her kindness henceforth in all men’s sight,
Now for the love you bear me ; such care I beg you give her
That from her love and friendship the king’s fair daughter
may not bar me ever.”

Then his devilish mother, with anger brimming o'er,
To the throng of Hegeling maidens quickly went once more.
She said: "Make ready, maidens, and to your toil betake you,
To do what you are bidden; the task to each that's given
ne'er forsake you."

The maidens then were sundered, and soon from each other torn;
They saw not one another, and long must live forlorn.
Those who once so worthily lofty rank were taking,
In winding yarn were busied; while they sat at work
their hearts were aching.

Some her flax were combing, others for her must spin;
Ladies of lofty breeding, whose pastime it had been
On their silken clothing to lay, with skill unsparing,
Gold and gems most costly, these for her now heavy toil
were bearing.

The first in birth among them at the court was kept;
Water she must carry to the room where Ortrun slept:
To wait upon that lady the high-born maid was bidden;
By name was she called Hergart; her lofty birth was nought,
she still was chidden.

Among them was another, brought from Galicia's strand;
The griffin her from Portugal had borne to a far-off land.
She to the Hegeling kingdom with Hagen's child was carried,
From over Ireland's borders; now with the maids in the
Norman land she tarried.

She was a prince's daughter, who castles owned and lands ;
The fire must now be lighted by her, with fair white hands,
While in the room well heated Gerlind's ladies rested.
For all the work she was doing no thanks on her by them
were ever wasted.

Now you well may wonder to hear her sorry plight.
For Gerlind's lowest wenches she drudged both day and night ;
Whatever task they set her, to do must she be willing.
It helped her not with the Normans that she at home a lofty
rank was filling.

The work was mean and shameful that they were made to do
For seven half years and over, — this is all too true, —
Until the young Lord Hartmut, when three wars were ended,
Had come again to his kingdom, and found the maids
at work, and ill-befriended.

To see again his loved one Hartmut deeply yearned ;
But when he looked upon her, the truth he quickly learned,
That she good food and lodging of late had seldom tasted :
For choosing to live rightly, 't was her reward to be
with sorrow wasted.

When forth she came to meet him, to her young Hartmut said :
“ Gu-drun, most lovely maiden, what is the life you have led
Since I, with all my warriors, my lands and home was leaving ? ”
She said : “ Such tasks they set me, 't was sin for you, and
shame to me 't was giving.”

Then outspoke young Hartmut: "Why has this been done,
Gerlind, my dearest mother? Your love she should have known;
When with you I left her, her lot you should have brightened,
And all her heavy sorrows you should for her within my land
have lightened."

His wolfish mother answered: "How could I better teach
King Hettel's ill-bred daughter? 'T was bootless to beseech,
Nor could I ever bend her, to make her leave her jeering:
She scorned both you and your father and kindred, too:
to this should you give hearing."

Then again spake Hartmut: "Much wrong we've done the maid.
Slain by us, her kindred and many knights lie dead;
While from the lovely maiden her father we have taken,
Slain by my father, Ludwig, and now with thoughtless words
her woes we waken."

Then answered him his mother: "My son, 'tis truth I say;
If we Gu-drun, proud maiden, for thirty years should pray,
If she with brooms were stricken, or with rods were beaten,
Your wife we ne'er could make her; hopeless it is the wayward
maid to threaten."

She farther said to Hartmut: "However, since you bid,
I'll gladly treat her better." But still her mind she hid,
And Hartmut never knew it; ere long Gu-drun would find her
Harsher yet than ever; and now the maiden's wrongs
could no one hinder.

Then went again old Gerlind to where Gu-drun then sat,
And said to the Hegeling maiden, in her wrath and hate :
“’T were best you now bethink you, or else, my fair young maiden,
You with your flowing tresses must wipe the stools and
seats, with dust thick laden.

“ Then the room I sleep in, mark what now I say,
You, to do my bidding, must sweep three times a day ;
You carefully must warm it, and keep the fire well burning.”
Said she : “ That do I gladly, rather than take a lover
I am spurning.”

Whatever she was bidden the willing maiden did ;
No work of hers she slighted, nor should for aught be chid.
For seven years, full-numbered, in a land far over the water,
The maid was toiling wearily, and none did hold her
as a kingly daughter.

The years had long been running, and the ninth was coming on,
When Hartmut to bethink him wisely had begun,
That indeed ’t was shameful that he no crown was wearing ;
And for himself and his kinsmen ’t was right the name of king
he now were bearing.

After heavy fighting, Hartmut, with his men,
Bearing the prize of bravery, riding home was seen.
He hoped the love of the maiden would now to him be granted ;
For, more than any other, he the fair Gu-drun for his
true love wanted.

When he reached his homestead, he bade them bring the maid.
His evil mother, Gerlind, allowed her to be clad
In meanest clothing only : Gu-drun but little heeded
The youthful Hartmut's wooing ; steadfast and true, no love
from him she needed.

To him his friends then whispered, that, whether glad or no
For this might be his mother, he never should forego
To bend the maid to his wishes ; and must his care be giving
That so he might with the lady for many a happy day in love
be living.

To the ladies' room he hastened, when thus his kinsmen spoke,
And there he found the maiden ; her by the hand he took,
And said to her : " Fair lady, love me now, I pray you,
And sit as queen beside me ; my knights and men shall worship
ever pay you."

Then said the lovely maiden : " For this I have no mind ;
For while the fiendish Gerlind to me is so unkind,
The love of knights, tho' worthy, I can long for never.
To her and all her kindred henceforth am I a bitter foe
forever."

" Sorry am I," said Hartmut ; " to you will I make good
The hate my mother Gerlind to you so harshly showed ;
As for both of us is worthy, your wrongs shall now be righted."
The high-born maiden answered : " I trust you not ; your word
need ne'er be plighted."

Then said to her young Hartmut, the lord of the Norman land :
“ Gudrun, most lovely maiden, you well must understand
Mine are these lands and castles : to none may you betake you ;
Who is there here would hang me if, 'gainst your will, I now
my own should make you ? ”

Then said King Hettel's daughter : “ That were a deed of shame :
Of aught so wrong and hateful never did I dream.
It would be said by princes, should they the tale be hearing,
That one of the kin of Hagen in Hartmut's land a harlot's name
is bearing.”

Then did Hartmut answer : “ What care I what they say ?
If only you, fair lady, do not say me nay,
A king my men shall see me, and you my seat be sharing.”
Then said the maid to Hartmut : “ That I should love you
be you never fearing.

“ Well you know, Sir Hartmut, how with me it stands ;
And all the wrong and sorrow I met with at your hands,
When far from home you carried me whom you had stolen,
And, wounded by your warriors, my father's men erewhile
in death had fallen.

“ Well known to you 't is also, — for this I mourn again, —
How my father, Hettel, was by your father slain.
Were I knight, and not a woman, he durst not come before me
Unless his weapons wearing. Why wed the man who from
my kindred tore me ? ”

For many years now bygone, it ever was the way,
No man should take a woman, and have her in his sway,
Unless they both were willing. Much praise for this is owing.
Gu-drun, the homeless maiden, her father's loss still mourned,
with tears o'erflowing.

Then spake to her in anger Hartmut, the youthful knight :
" Whatever may befall you, I reckon not for your plight ;
Since now you are not willing to wear the crown beside me,
You 'll have what you are seeking, your meed you 'll daily earn,
nor need you chide me."

" That will I earn most gladly, as I have done before,
Though for the men of Hartmut the hardest toil I bore,
And for Queen Gerlind's women. If God my wrongs forgetteth,
To bear them I am willing ; but heavy is the woe that me
besetteth."

Still they sought to soothe her : first to the court they sent
Young Ortrun, Hartmut's sister, whose looks all kindness meant ;
'T was hoped that she and her maidens, now by friendly dealing,
Would bring Gu-drun, poor lone one, to bear towards them all
a better feeling.

Then to his sister Ortrun Hartmut freely spake :
" Wealth I will give you, sister, if kindly, for my sake,
To me you will be helpful, and bring Gu-drun, fair lady,
Soon to forget her sorrows ; nor o'er her woes to brood be
ever ready."

Then spake the youthful Ortrun, the Norman maiden fair :
"To help both her and her maidens shall ever be my care,
Till they forget their sorrows: I bow my head before her,
And I and mine will hold her even as our kin, and watchful
love spread o'er her."

Gu-drun now said to Ortrun: "My hearty thanks you win,
That you, with kindly wishes, would see me sit as queen,
By the side of Hartmut, while with pride I'm gladdened:
For this my trust I give you, but homeless, none the less,
my days are saddened."





Tale the Twenty-first.

HOW GUDRUN MUST WASH CLOTHES ON THE BEACH.

THEN to Gu-drun they offered castles strong and lands :
Of these would she have nothing. So, upon the sands,
She must wash their clothing, from early morn till even.
Great ill this wrought for Ludwig, when he with Herwic in the
fight had striven.

First, Gu-drun was bidden to leave her seat, that soon
She, the high-born maiden, should go with fair Ortrun ;
They bade that she be merry, and wine with her be drinking.
The homeless wanderer answered : “ To make me queen you never
need be thinking.

“ Well you wot, Lord Hartmut, whate’er your wish may be,
Betrothed am I to another, and am no longer free.
That I one day shall wed him has with an oath been plighted ;
Until by death he ’s taken I will not wed with any man
e’er knighted.”

Then spake the lordly Hartmut: "You only waste your breath;
By nought shall we be sundered unless it shall be death.
In friendship with my sister you should now be living;
Your hardships she will lighten, and will, I know, her love
to you be giving."

Fain to think was Hartmut that her unyielding mood
Might now by this be softened; he hoped, whatever good
Should e'er befall his sister, the maiden would be sharing:
Thus for both he trusted, that a happy life ere long would them
be cheering.

Gu-drun soon greeted kindly many a friend and maid.
Ortrun sat beside her; her hue grew rosy-red
With eating and with drinking, ere many days were ended.
Enough was always ready: still the poor girl her mood
ne'er wisely mended.

If Hartmut thought to greet her, and spoke in friendly mood,
How little did it cheer her! She o'er her woes did brood,
That she and all her maidens in a far-off land were bearing.
Soon, against young Hartmut, of harsh and angry words
she was not sparing.

So long a time this lasted, the king at length was wroth;
He said: "Gu-drun, fair lady, as good am I in birth
As is the young King Herwic, who now you think is fitter
Than I to be your lover: too much you jeer at me, with words
most bitter.

“If you would leave your sorrow, for both of us ’t were gain.
It wounds me out of measure when any gives you pain,
Or seeks your heart to burden, or in your wish to cross you :
Though now you are unfriendly, to be my queen I yet would
gladly choose you.”

Then young Hartmut left her, and straight his men he sought.
He bade them to be watchful of ills that threatened aught,
And well to guard his kingdom ; for he the while bethought him,
So sorely was he hated, ’t was much to fear some harm would yet
be wrought him.

The cross and wicked Gerlind for her hard tasks did set ;
She on a seat but seldom any rest did get.
Erst ’mong princes’ daughters men were wont to greet her,
As for her was rightful ; now with the scorned and lowly
they must meet her.

To her, in mood unfriendly, the old she-wolf then spake :
“Now Queen Hilda’s daughter I a drudge will make ;
Although her evil feelings seem so strong and steady,
We yet shall see her toiling as ne’er before to do has she
been ready.”

Then said the high-born maiden : “To work with all my might,
With hand and heart, I ’m willing ; in this, both day and night,
Will I be always busy, and every hour be striving ;
Since ill-luck begrudges that I among my friends should
now be living.”

The wicked Gerlind answered : “ Now daily to the beach
You my clothes must carry, there on the sands to bleach.
You must for me and my maidens be washing and be drying ;
And that no one find you idle, your work with care you ever
must be plying.”

Then spake the high-born maiden : “ Wife of a mighty king,
If they will only teach me the way to wash and wring,
And how to cleanse your clothing, to do it I am willing.
Bliss no more I look for ; still greater woe my heart must
yet be filling.

“ Bid them now to teach me, and I will gladly learn ;
So high I do not hold me that I the task should spurn.
Thus shall I be earning the food I here am eating ;
Nought I say against it.” The poor Gu-drun her lot
was wisely meeting.

Then by a washerwoman clothes to the sands were brought,
And how to wash and dry them the maiden now was taught.
Much at first she sorrowed, and by the work was flurried,
Yet was she spared by no one. So was the fair Gu-drun
by Gerlind worried.

Before King Ludwig's castle, she gained a skilful hand ;
For knights who there were dwelling within the Norman land,
None could be more helpful, their clothing better washing.
Loudly mourned her maidens to see her toiling where
the waves were dashing.

One there was among them who was also a great king's child ;
The wailing of the others was to hers a whisper mild.
This work so mean and lowly went to their hearts too nearly,
As they saw the high-born lady drudging on the shore,
both late and early.

Then with love true-hearted Hildeburg made moan :
“ Well we all must rue it — to God may this be known —
Who in this Norman kingdom erst with Gu-drun were landing ;
No rest ought we to hope for while on the sea-beach washing
she is standing.”

This was heard by Gerlind, who in anger spoke :
“ If on the toils of your lady with such ill-will you look,
The work shall you be doing, and her place be filling.”
“ That would I do right gladly,” said Hildeburg, “ if only you
were willing.

“ For the love of God Almighty, Gerlind, my lady queen,
Let not this great king's daughter toiling alone be seen :
A crown, too, wore my father, yet work would I be doing ;
Let me with her stand washing, whatever good or ill we may
be knowing.

“ It fills my heart with sorrow, I feel her woes my own.
Once the greatest honor to her by God was shown :
Her forefathers and kindred were kings, and none were higher ;
Though now her work is lowly, to toil with the maiden
I shall never tire.”

Then said the wicked Gerlind : “ This oft will bring you pain ;
However hard the winter, still in snow and rain
My clothes must you be washing, altho’ cold winds are blowing ;
So will you be wishing that you the warmth of heated rooms
were knowing.”

Unwillingly she waited until the night drew near ;
From this Gu-drun the high-born gained at last some cheer.
Then into her bedroom went Hildeburg in sorrow ;
There they wept together for the work that they must do
upon the morrow.

Then the Lady Hildeburg said to her in tears :
“ The woes that you are bearing my heart with you now shares ;
I begged the old she-devil no more alone to leave you
Upon the sea-sands washing ; with you I ’ll bear the burden,
and my help will give you.”

The homeless maiden answered : “ May Christ your love reward,
That you with so much sorrow of all my woes have heard.
If we may wash together, the days will be the brighter,
And time will seem far shorter, and on our hearts the shame
will weigh the lighter.”

Soon as her wish was granted, down to the sandy shore
The clothing then she carried, gladness to know no more.
There must they wash in sorrow, whatever was the weather ;
Whate’er was done by others, yet still these two must wash
and toil together.

When her throng of handmaidens had time from work to spare,
Bitter was their weeping, to see her standing there
Upon the sea-sands washing. Loud were their moans and many,
Nor did their sorrow lessen ; greater woe was never known
by any.

Long the toiling lasted, — that is true enough ;
There must they be working full five years and a half.
Clothes for Hartmut's followers they must wash and whiten :
Ne'er were maidens sadder ; their toils before the castle
nought could lighten.





Tale the Twenty-Second.

HOW HILDA MADE WAR TO BRING BACK HER DAUGHTER.

WE now will speak no longer of the toil the maidens bore
For knights as well as ladies. Queen Hilda evermore
Her thoughts to this had given how to win back her daughter,
Out of the Norman kingdom, whither from home the daring
Hartmut brought her.

First were workmen bidden, near to the deep sea-flood,
Of ships to build her seven, strong, well made, and good ;
With two-and-twenty barges, broad, with both ends rounded.
Whate'er for them was needed was quickly brought, and
everything abounded.

Forty galleys also lay upon the sea ;
On these her eyes were feeding. Longing great had she
To see the throng of fighters who should soon be sailing.
She their food made ready ; for this the knights her praise
were loudly telling.

The time was drawing nearer, when now to cross the sea
No more should they be waiting, who wished the maids to free,
That in a far-off kingdom in hardest toil were living.
Now Hilda sent for her liegemen; to those who called them
clothes she first was giving.

The day that she had chosen was at the Christmas-tide,
When they must seek the foemen by whom King Hettel died.
Forthwith to friends and kinsmen Hilda gave her bidding,
That they to bring her daughter back from the Norman land
must then be speeding.

Trusty men were bidden by Hilda first to go
To Herwic and his followers, that one and all should know
Of the inroad on the Normans that she had sworn and plotted.
To many Hegeling children this erelong an orphan's life
allotted.

The men sent out by Hilda to Herwic rode in haste:
For what they then were coming the king full quickly guessed;
Then went he forth to meet them, soon as he saw them nearing;
Gladly them he greeted, and soon from them Queen Hilda's wish
was hearing.

“ Well you know, Lord Herwic, our woe and plight forlorn,
And how the Hegeling warriors to help the queen have sworn.
Yourself Queen Hilda trusteth more than any other;
To none Gu-drun is dearer, — the homeless maid, long Sundered
from her mother.”

The well-born knight thus answered : “ I know in truth too well
How Hartmut had the boldness my fair betrothed to steal,
Because his love she slighted, and hearkened to my wooing ;
For this Gu-drun, my lady, her father lost, and still her lot
is ruing.

“ My pledge and hearty greeting bear to your lady good ;
No more the Norman Hartmut by me shall be allowed
To hold so long in bondage my own betrothed maiden :
For me, of all, 't is fittest to bring the lady home, our lives
to gladden.

“ To Hilda and her kinsmen this answer you may say :
When Christmas time is over, on the sixth-and-twentieth day,
I will ride to the Hegelings, three thousand fighters taking.”
Then the men of Hilda waited no more, but home their way
were making.

Now Herwic made him ready, and to the strife gave thought,
With many faithful liegemen who oft had bravely fought.
Those who to go were willing he for war outfitted ;
Though wintry was the weather, they to take the field
no longer waited.

Of help the widowed Hilda sorely felt the need :
Soon to her friends in Denmark she sent her men with speed,
To tell the knights and warriors no more at home to tarry ;
For they to the Norman kingdom must ride, to free Gu-drun
from bondage dreary.

They bore to the youthful Horant this errand from the queen :
That he and all his kinsmen were to her lord of kin,
And the sorrows of her daughter should by them be heeded ;
For death to her were better than ever that her child
to Hartmut should be wedded.

Then sent the knight this answer : “ Unto Queen Hilda say, —
Though yet ’t will cost to women many a bitter day,
I still, with all my followers, will help be gladly giving ;
For this will be heard the weeping of many a mother’s child,
in the land now living.

“ I bid you now, moreover, to say unto the queen, —
Ere many days are ended, in her land will I be seen ;
Tell her that my wishes all to war are bending,
And soon ten thousand warriors from out the Danish land
will I be sending.”

The men sent there by Hilda of Horant took their leave :
They sped to the Waalisch marches, and found Morunc the brave
With all his men about him, a margrave rich and daring.
He gladly saw them coming, and of a loving welcome
was not sparing.

Then spake the knightly Irold : “ Since now by me ’t is known
That into the Hegeling kingdom, before seven weeks are gone,
I with all my followers am bidden to be riding,
For this will I be ready, whatever luck be there for us
betiding.”

The news was spread by Morunc, within the Holstein land,
That Hilda now was sending for all her friends at hand ;
He said that all good warriors must the field be taking.
To the Danish knight, brave Fru-te, they also gave the word,
his help bespeaking.

The worthy knight, then answering, his ready will did show :
“ Back to her home will we bring her. Thirteen years ago,
We swore the land of the Normans should with war be wasted ;
'T was then the friends of Hartmut stole the maid Gu-drun,
and homeward hasted.”

Wâ-te, the knight from Sturmland, to this at once gave thought,
How he might also help her. Altho' he yet knew nought
Of the word that Hilda sent him, yet he at once bestirred him ;
Of his knights a goodly number then in haste he called,
who gladly heard him.

All of them were busy with care for the coming war ;
Wâ-te the old from Sturmland brought from near and far
Full a thousand kinsmen, for the fight well fitted ;
With these he hoped that Hartmut would soon be overcome
and be outwitted.

The sad and homeless women in toil and pain were kept
By the cross and evil Gerlind : but fewer wrongs were heaped
Upon the Lady Hergart ; (this name to her was given :)
She loved the king's high cup-bearer, and greatly hoped to be
a princess even.

For this fair Hilda's daughter often sorely wept ;
And Hergart, too, yet later woe and sorrow reaped,
Because she ne'er with others would their toils be sharing.
Whate'er to her might happen, Gu-drun for all her ills
was little caring.

Of the Hegelings none were idle, as you before have heard :
Tho' many for all their toiling would find but scant reward,
Yet all within the kingdom their ready help were lending.
Now the knights were thinking for the brother of Gu-drun
't were best they should be sending.

Riders then went swiftly into the land of the North,
And found in an open meadow the youth of kingly birth,
Where by the edge of a river many birds were flocking :
There with his trusty falconer he showed his skill, and spent
his time in hawking.

As soon as, riding quickly, these by him were seen,
He said : " Those men now coming are sent to us by the queen ;
They come to give her bidding, proudly hither hasting ;
My mother thinketh wrongly that we the war forget,
and time are wasting."

He set his hawk a-flying, and thence at once he rode.
Very soon thereafter darkened was his mood ;
For when the men he greeted, and they their tale were telling,
He learned that the queen, his mother, ever in tears her loss
was aye bewailing.

She to the youthful warrior sent her greeting kind :
In her wretched lot, she asked him what might be his mind ;
And asked how many followers he could to the war be leading ;
For from the Hegeling kingdom they all to the Norman land
must soon be speeding.

Then Ortwin sent this answer : “ Me dost thou rightly bid ;
I from hence will hasten, and bring from far and wide
Twenty thousand fighters, — men both brave and daring ;
These my steps will follow even to death, their lives and
homes forswearing.”

Now from every border many warriors went
Riding to Hilda's kingdom, for whom the queen had sent ;
They vied with one another, to win her praises striving.
Not less than sixty thousand together came, their help for
Hilda giving.

On the river Waal Sir Morune had upon the wave
Of broad-built ships full sixty, strong to bear the brave
Who with the Hegelings sailing would o'er the sea be carried,
To free Gu-drun, the maiden, who sadly now among the Normans
tarried.

From out the Northland also finest ships were brought,
With horses and with clothing, as good as could be sought :
Decked were all the helmets, the weapons glittered brightly,
Ready for the onset bravely they came, in armor fair and
knightly.

Now by their shields men reckoned how many there might be
Who to the Norman kingdom would go the maid to free,
And to the great Queen Hilda their help to give were ready ;
They numbered seventy thousand ; gifts to all were given by
the queenly lady.

On all who there were gathered, or to court who later came,
The queen, though ever mournful, yet let her kindness beam :
She gave them hearty welcome, and every one she greeted ;
Wondrous was the clothing that to the chosen knights
Queen Hilda meted.

The many ships of Hilda were stored with all things well,
And early on the morrow were ready thence to sail ;
Seemly was the outfit for her worthy guests who waited :
They chose not to be going, while aught they lacked to meet
the foeman hated.

They put on board the weapons, as was the queen's behest,
And with them many helmets of beaten steel the best.
Hauberks white were given, besides the ones in wearing,
For warriors full five hundred ; these she bade them take,
to war now faring.

Their anchor-ropes well twisted of strongest silk were made :
Their sails both rich and showy to the winds were spread ;
These to the shores of the Norman the Hegelings would carry,
Who back to Lady Hilda would gladly bring Gu-drun,
of waiting weary.

The anchors for the sailors were not of iron made,
But of bell-metal moulded ; (so have we heard it said :)
They with Spanish brasses all were bound and strengthened,
That loadstones should not hold them, and so the sailors' way
by this be lengthened.

To Wâ-te and his followers the Lady Hilda gave
Many clasps and arm-bands. This roused the strong and brave
To meet their death from foemen, for the Hegelings fighting,
When they from Hartmut's castle strove to wrest the maid,
in bondage sitting.

Freely then and earnestly Queen Hilda spoke her thought
Unto the men from Daneland : " When you have bravely fought
On the stormy field of warfare, I will reward you fitly.
Still my banner follow ; that will show the way, and lead you
rightly."

They asked of her, who held it ; to this then answered she :
" He bears the name of Horant ; a Danish lord is he.
His mother, Hettel's sister, she it was who bore him ;
Let him by you be trusted ; forsake him not in fight
with foes before him.

" Never, my hardy warriors, must you forget my son,
Young Ortwin, dear-belovéd, to manhood nearly grown.
Of life the youth has numbered twenty years already ;
If any risk should threaten, to guard him well then let
your help be speedy."

To this they pledged them gladly, and all together said,
So long as they were with him nought had he to dread ;
If he their lead would follow, those from whom he parted
Again unharmed would see him. At this young Ortwin showed
himself light-hearted.

Soon the ships were laden with goods of every kind,
And now to tell his wonder none fit words could find.
They asked good Hilda's blessing on the work now undertaken ;
The queen then begged of Heaven that they by Christ should
never be forsaken.

Many youths went with them whose fathers erst were slain ;
Now bereft, these brave ones to right their wrongs were fain.
The women of the Hegelings were mourning all and weeping,
Beseeching God in Heaven to bring them back their sons
in his holy keeping.

But all this pain and sorrow the warriors might not bear ;
They sternly bade the women their bitter wails to spare ;
Then on their way they started in gladness, shouting loudly,
And as they went on shipboard all were heard to sing,
and set forth proudly.

After these daring sailors had cast off from the land,
Many sorrowing women did at the windows stand :
From Matelan's lofty castle, never the watch forsaking,
Their eyes the sea-path followed, as from the land the men
their way were taking.

A friendly wind was blowing, and loudly cracked the mast;
They the sails stretched tightly, and left the land at last.
The son of many a mother went, for honor seeking;
Though this awaited many, yet to gain it they must
toil be taking.

I cannot tell you fully of all that them befell,
Save that the lord of Karadie, who in that land did dwell,
With fighters came to help them, the foeman never fearing;
He from home brought with him ten thousand knights, all men
of strength and daring.

Where foes upon the Wulpensand had met in deadly fray,
These knights from many a kingdom, now, at this later day,
Chose the spot for meeting; and here they came together:
A church had here been builded, and old and young alike had
their gifts brought hither.

Now within its harbor, to seek their fathers' graves,
Out of the ships here gathered went many of Hilda's braves.
Bitter was their sorrow, and anger keen did waken;
Hard would it be for any who erst in fight the lives of their
friends had taken.

Unto the lord of Moorland they hearty welcome gave.
Four and twenty broad-boats he brought with warriors brave;
Food therein was laden that might for all have lasted
Till twenty years were ended: to war with the Normans now
they gladly hasted.

When they to sail were ready, they left the sheltering shore
To make their way o'er the waters; but heavy toil they bore
Upon the wild sea-billows before their sail was ended.
What helped it that their leaders, Fru-te the Dane and Wâ-te,
them befriended?

A wind from the south was blowing, and drove them out to sea.
The crew of warlike shipmates from fear no more were free;
They could not find the bottom, altho' they should be casting
Lengths of rope a thousand; many sailors wept, their lot
foretasting.

Before the mount at Givers soon lay Queen Hilda's host;
However good their anchors, upon that gloomy coast,
Drawn by loadstones thither, they a long time rested.
Their masts so tough and hardy soon before their eyes
were bent and twisted.

When now the hopeless sailors were weeping o'er their lot,
Thus spoke the aged Wâ-te: "Anchors again throw out,
The strongest and the heaviest, into the sea unsounded.
I've heard of many wonders I would rather see, than here
on the rocks be grounded.

"Since, astray long sailing, our lady's ships here lie,
And we so far are driven across the darkling sea,
I now will tell a sea-tale, that stirred my childish wonder,
Of how, near the mount at Givers, a kingdom erst was built
by a mighty founder.

“ Men there in wealth are living ; so rich is all their land
That under the flowing rivers silver is the sand ;
With this they make their castles, and the stones are golden
With which their walls are builded. In all the kingdom none
in want are holden.

“ ’T was told to me, moreover, (by God are wonders wrought,)
If one who by the loadstone unto this mount is brought,
Here will only tarry till the wind from the land is blowing,
He with all his kindred may be forever rich when homeward
going.

“ Let us our food be eating until our luck shall turn,”
Said then the aged Wâ-te ; “ before we hence are borne,
Our ships that here are lying shall with ore be loaded :
When this we home shall carry, wealth shall we have that
no one e’er foreboded.”

Then spake the Danish Fru-te : “ A still, unruffled sea
Shall never keep in idleness the men now here with me :
A thousand times I swear to you, no gold would I be seeking,
But rather away from this mountain, with friendly winds, would I
my way be taking.”

The Christian men among them raised to Heaven a prayer ;
But yet the ships ne’er yielded, strongly fastened there :
For four long days or over all their hopes were thwarted ;
Sorely feared the Hegelings that they from thence could
nevermore be started.

The clouds now lifted higher, as the mighty God had willed ;
Then no more they sorrowed, for soon the waves were stilled,
And from out the darkness the sun was shining brightly.
A wind from the west was blowing, and now the woes were o'er
of the wanderers knightly.

For miles full six and twenty, past Givers' craggy shore,
The ships at last were wafted. By this they saw yet more
The work of God and his goodness, in all the help then given.
Wâ-te with his followers had been too near the rocks
of loadstone driven.

To smoothly flowing waters they now were come at last :
Their sins were not rewarded, and all their woes were past,
While fear from them was taken, since God was not unwilling.
The ships that bore the warriors straight to the Norman land
at length were sailing.

But soon among the sailors arose again a wail ;
For now the ships were groaning, and soon began to reel,
Tossed among the breakers that overwhelmed them nearly :
Then said the brave knight Ortwin : " We now indeed must buy
our honors dearly."

Outspake then one of the sailors : " Alas ! and well-a-day !
I would we were at Givers, and dead near its mountain lay !
If one is by God forgotten, by whom is he befriended ?
My brave and hardy warriors, the roar of the blustering sea
is not yet ended."

Then cried the knight, Sir Horant, he of the Danish land :
“ Be of good heart, brave fellows ; I well can understand
This wind no harm will do us ; from out the west ’t is blowing.”
This cheered the lord of Karadie, on him and on his men
fresh hope bestowing.

Horant, the daring warrior, up to the topmast climbed,
And the widely stretching billows swept, with eyes undimmed,
Keeping for land an outlook. They soon his call were hearing :
“ Wait you now, unfearing ; I see that we the Norman
land are nearing ! ”

The word to all was given, that they should lower sail :
Searching the waters over, they saw far off a hill,
Lofty, and thickly wooded, with groves and leafage shaded ;
Then old Wâ-te bade them thither to bend their way,
and this they heeded.





Tale the Twenty-Third.

HOW HILDA'S WARRIORS LANDED IN SIGHT OF HARTMUT'S
KINGDOM.

BEFORE the hill they landed, in sight of the leafy grove ;
Wary to be, and daring, them did it now behoove.
First they dropped their anchors, deep the waters under ;
In a lonely spot were they hidden, where none could see,
nor at their coming wonder.

Then from the ships, to rest them, they stepped upon the beach.
Hey ! what they had longed for was now within their reach !
A stream of pure, cold water, through the fir-trees flowing,
Ran down the wooded hillside, upon the wave-worn knights
new life bestowing.

While the weary warriors were resting and asleep,
Irold soon had clambered, there his watch to keep,
Into a tree high-branching. He then began to ponder
Which way they should be taking ; and, lo ! the Norman land
he saw with wonder.

“Now, my youths, be merry!” thus cried the youthful knight.
“My cares indeed are lightened, for now I have in sight
Seven lofty palaces, with roomy halls wide-spreading;
Before to-morrow’s midday, the land of Normandy shall we
be treading.”

Then said the wise old Wâ-te: “Up to the sands now bear
All your shields and weapons, whate’er in fight you wear.
Let every one be busy, and let the youths be hastened;
At once lead out the horses; helmets and breastplates must
with straps be fastened.

“And now, if any outfits are not good to wear,
Nor meet for you in fighting, to that I’ll give my care.
The queen, my lady Hilda, has sent with us already
Full five hundred breastplates; these will we give to any
who are needy.”

Quickly were the horses forth on the sea-beach led;
And all the showy horse-cloths, that should on them be spread,
Were by the men unfolded, and laid on steeds in waiting,
To see which best beseemed them; and each then took the one
he deemed most fitting.

In leaping, and in galloping up and down the shore,
They rode, and watched the horses; many, strong before,
Now were dull and sluggish, nor longer quick at running;
Too long had they been standing, and Wâ-te had them killed,
as not worth owning.

Then spake the kingly Herwic : “ I too will go with thee ;
To live or die I am ready, seeking the maid to free.
To you she is a sister, but to me for a wife they gave her ;
To her am I ever faithful, nor for a day uncared-for
will I leave her.”

Then quoth Wâ-te angrily : “ ’T is childish thus to speak,
Brave and chosen warriors : such risks you should not seek,
And this for truth I tell you. Spurn you not my warning ;
Should you be found by Hartmut, you ’ll on his gallows hang,
your rashness mourning.”

To him King Herwic answered : “ Though good or ill betide,
Friends should aye be friendly, standing side by side.
I and my friend, young Ortwin, will ne’er the task give over,
Whatever shall befall us, and search will make till we
Gu-drun recover.”

When now upon this errand both were bent to go,
They sent for friends and kinsfolk, and did their wishes show.
They bade them to be faithful, and said the oaths then taken
Must never be forgotten, and they who went must never be
forsaken.

“ Of your pledges I remind you,” the youthful Ortwin said :
“ If we, by foemen taken, should be in bondage led,
You with gold must free us, and so our bonds must loosen ;
Lands must you sell and castles, nor ever sorrow feel that thus
you ’ve chosen.

"And, warriors brave, now hearken to what we more will say ;
If foes our life begrudge us, and us in fight shall slay,
Be not our death forgotten, let it on them be wroken :
Your swords in Hartmut's kingdom must make your daring there
be loudly spoken.

"This we further bid you, my good and well-born knights :
E'en though, with toil the hardest, every warrior fights,
Let not those homeless maidens be by you forsaken ;
Until the strife is settled, let not their hope and trust in you
be shaken."

Their faith then freely pledging, each gave to the king his hand ;
And all the best among them swore that home and land
They nevermore would look on, but still afar would tarry,
Until again to their homesteads they from the Norman land
the maids should carry.

All of them were faithful, but yet were weeping sore ;
They feared the hate of Ludwig, and ills for them in store.
That they could send no others they were deeply mourning ;
And all were sadly thinking, " No one now can death from them
be turning."

All day they talked together ; it now was near its end :
The sun, that low was sinking, thro' clouds its beams did send :
Erelong it sank o'er Gulstred, and there at last was hidden.
Ortwin and Herwic tarried, that night to go, by the
waning light forbidden.



Tale the Twenty-fourth.

HOW THEIR COMING WAS MADE KNOWN TO GUDRUN.

OF them we speak no longer ; we now will let you hear
Yet more about the maidens : how hope their lot did cheer
Who on a far-off seashore must wearily toil at washing :
Gu-drun and Hildeburg must wash all day on the sands
where waves were dashing.

'T was the time of spring-tide fasting, and at the noon of day.
To them a swan came floating ; thereat Gu-drun 'gan say :
" O bird so fair and lovely, such pain for me thou art feeling,
That now thou hither speedest from a far-off land, across
the water sailing."

Then to her in answer spake the friendly swan,
Although a God-sent angel, in speech most like a man :
" Words from God I bring you ; if you for this be seeking,
Tidings I give of your kindred ; of these, most high-born maid,
would I be speaking."

When the lovely maiden his speech so wondrous heard,
Scarce could she believe it, that thus an untamed bird,
Now, within her hearing, in tones like these had spoken.
While to him she listened, it seemed that his words from
the mouth of a man had broken.

Then said the bird-like angel: "Hopeful you now may be,
Homeless, sorrowing maiden; gladness shall come to thee.
If you would hear of your birth-land, listen while I tell you;
From there I bring you tidings, for God hath sent me, of your
woes to heal you."

At this, Gu-drun, the fair one, upon the sands down fell;
Crossing her arms, the maiden her lowly prayers did tell.
Then she said to Hildeburg: "God hath us in his keeping,
And help to us has granted; we now no more shall sorrow
know, nor weeping."

To the bird then said the maiden: "Christ has sent thee here
To us, poor homeless maidens, our heavy hearts to cheer;
Good and trusted harbinger, tidings tell yet other:
Is now Queen Hilda living? Of poor Gu-drun is she the
much-loved mother."

The Heaven-sent bird thus answered: "This can I say to thee;
Hilda, thy queenly mother, in health did I lately see.
To search for thee already her warriors she has banded;
Such throngs no kin or widow, seeking for friends, on foeman's
shore e'er landed."

Then spake the high-born maiden : “ Good tidings thou dost bear :
Be thou with me not weary, still more I fain would hear.
Lives yet my brother Ortwin, as king in Ortland dwelling,
And Herwic, my betrothed ? ’T would gladden me could’st thou
this news be telling.”

The bird-like angel answered : “ That can I gladly tell ;
Herwic and young King Ortwin are both alive and well.
Upon the swelling billows, that rose and sank unending,
I saw those knightly sailors ; each with even stroke to his
oar was bending.”

She said : “ This tell me also, if ’t is known to thee,
Whether Morunc and Irold are now upon the sea,
And hither come to seek me ; the truth I fain would gather.
Gladly I would see them, for they are kin to Hettel, who was
my father.”

To her the bird thus answered : “ That can I tell you, too ;
Morunc, and with him Irold, I saw, in search of you.
They to this land are coming ; their help will soon be given
To fight for you, fair lady, and many a helmet will by them
be riven.”

Then spake the winged angel : “ I bid you now farewell,
And leave you in God’s keeping, for work awaits me still.
I overstay my errand to linger here, yet speaking.”
Then from their sight he faded, and left the maidens’ hearts
well-nigh to breaking.

Then said Hilda's daughter: "My sorrows none can know;
Much that I wished to ask thee, now must I forego.
For the sake of Christ, I beg thee, ere thou alone dost leave me,
Poor and wretched maiden, that freedom from my woes thou yet
wilt give me."

Before her eyes he floated, and once again he spake:
"Ere yet we two are parted, and hence my way I take,
If I in aught can help you, of that I will not weary,
And, since through Christ you ask it, to tell you of your kin
will longer tarry."

She said: "I fain were hearing, if thou the truth hast learned,
If Horant, lord of Denmark, his way has hither turned,
And with him leads his kinsmen? They leave me here forsaken.
Knowing him brave and daring, I would my lonely lot
his care might waken."

"From Denmark sailing hither, Horant, your kinsman, comes;
He to war is leading his followers from their homes.
The banner of Queen Hilda aloft in his hand he is bearing;
'T is thus the Hegeling warriors now the Norman Hartmut's land
are nearing."

Gu-drun then asked him further: "This would I also hear:
Lives Wâ-te still of Sturmland? If so, no more I fear.
We all might then be happy, if thou could'st this be telling, —
That under the flag of my mother he and the aged Fru-te
are hither sailing."

To her the angel answered: "Hither comes in haste
Wâ-te the old from Sturmland. He in his hand holds fast
The strong and guiding rudder, and Fru-te's ship is steering.
Truer friends or better you ne'er need wish their swords
for you were bearing."

Once more the bird was ready upon his way to go;
Then said the wretched maiden: "I still am full of woe;
And now to know am longing — if life such bliss can lend me —
When I, poor homeless maiden, shall see my mother's knights,
whom she doth send me."

The angel answered quickly: "Your happiness is near;
To-morrow morning early, will two brave knights be here.
Both are true and upright, and falsehood ne'er will tell you;
Whatever news they bring you you well may trust, and never
will it fail you."

At last the heavenly angel hence in truth must go:
From him the homeless maidens sought no more to know.
In mind they ever wavered, 'twixt hope and fear still tossing;
Where their helpers lingered they could not know, yet trust
were never losing.

Lazily and slowly they washed the livelong day;
Of knights sent there by Hilda, who now were on their way
From over the Hegeling border, busily they chatted:
Gu-drun's good, faithful kinsmen were by the long-lost maids
uneasily awaited.

Each day must have its ending ; to the castle now must go
The weary, homesick maidens. They there must harshness know
From evil-minded Gerlind, who their lives still harrowed ;
A day went by but seldom that she scolded them not, nor still
their bondage narrowed.

Thus she spoke to the maidens : “ Who gave the word to you
That you might wash so slowly my clothes and linen, too ?
All the things I gave you must be quickly whitened ;
'T were best that you be careful, you else shall weep, and
for your lives be frightened.”

Then answered her young Hildeburg : “ Our work we ever mind ;
Truly you ought, fair lady, to be to us more kind.
We oft are almost freezing, with water o'er us splashing ;
If only the winds were warmer, we might for you far better
then be washing.”

Grimly answered Gerlind, and roughly them did twit :
“ Whatever be the weather, my work you may not slight.
Early must you be washing, nor rest till night be knowing ;
To-morrow morn, at daybreak, you from my room must down
to the beach be going.

“ I ween you know already that Holytide is near ;
Palm-Sunday soon is coming, and guests will then be here :
If to ill-washed clothing my knights shall then be treated,
Never in kingly castle to those who washed have woes
like yours been meted.”

Then the maidens left her ; they laid aside, all wet,
The clothing they were wearing — they better care should get.
All they had known of kindness for them no longer lasted,
And soon for this they sorrowed, for bread and water now
was all they tasted.

Now the downcast maidens for sleep had sought their bed ;
But this was not the softest, and each one, in her need,
A dirty shirt was wearing. Thus was Gerlind showing
Her care and kindness for them, on benches hard a pillow
ne'er bestowing.

Never Gu-drun, poor maiden, on a harder bed had lain ;
All were tired with watching till day should dawn again.
They had but broken slumber ; I ween, they oft bethought them
How soon the knights were coming, of whom the angel-bird
the news had brought them.

Soon as the morning lightened, Hildeburg the good,
Erst from Galicia stolen, at the window gazing stood ;
All night she slept but little, but on her bed lay tossing.
She saw that snow had fallen, and hope the heart-sick maid
was wellnigh losing.

Then spake the hapless maiden : “ To wash we now must go.
Should God not change the weather, and we, in storm and snow,
To-day must stand a-washing, before the evening cometh
We, all chilled and barefoot, shall dead be found, while us
the cold benumbeth.”

By hope they yet were gladdened, e'en as they well might be,
That those sent out by Hilda they ere night should see.
When the lovely maidens upon this thought were dwelling,
It made them now more happy, and lighter was the pain
their hearts were feeling.

Then said Hilda's daughter: "My friend, you should beseech
The stern, ill-minded Gerlind, that on the pebbly beach
Shoes she will allow us; she may herself be learning
That if we go there barefoot we soon shall freeze, and there
our death be earning."

The maidens then went seeking King Ludwig and his queen.
He, in sleep held fondly, in Gerlind's arms was seen;
Both were sunk in slumber, and the maids, their anger fearing,
Dared not them to waken: ere long Gu-drun yet greater woe
was bearing.

The weeping of the maidens by the sleeping queen was heard,
Who quick began to chide them with many a surly word:
"Why, you heedless maidens, are you not to the seashore going,
There to wash my clothing, and rinse them with clean water
o'er them flowing?"

Then said Gu-drun, in sorrow: "I know not where to go,
For in the night has fallen a deep and heavy snow.
That we by death be stricken unless you now are willing,
Do not send us washing; to stand without our shoes will us
be killing."

To her the she-wolf answered ; “ That I do not fear ;
Now to the shore betake you, or weal or woe to bear.
If you be slow in washing, my wrath may you be dreading ;
E’en if you die, what care I ? ” At this the hopeless maids
more tears were shedding.

Taking then the clothing, they went to the water’s brink :
“ Of this,” said Gu-drun, “ God willing, I will make you think.”
Then, in the cold, barefooted, through the snow they waded ;
The very high-born maidens, forsaken in their woe, were worn
and faded.

Down to the beach they plodded, as was their wont before,
Bearing the clothing with them to the bleak and sandy shore.
They once more were standing, over the washing stooping ;
Ever they were thinking of their sorry plight, and sadly
were they hoping.

Often now, and earnestly, over the watery waste,
While they toiled and sorrowed, longing looks they cast ;
Still of those now dreaming sent by the queen to free them,
Who o’er the sea were sailing. The high-born maidens hoped
erelong to see them.





Tale the Twenty-fifth.

HOW HERWIC AND ORTWIN FOUND GUDRUN.

AFTER they long had waited, now saw these washers lone
Two in a boat fast nearing ; others were there none.
Then said the maiden, Hildeburg, unto Gu-drun, the lady :
“ These two are sailing hither ; perhaps the friends sent here
are come already.”

She, full of sorrow, answered : “ Ah, woe is me, poor maid !
Although, in truth I ’m happy, I yet am also sad.
If at the seaside washing Queen Hilda’s men shall see us,
Standing thus barefooted, we from the shame of this
can never free us.

“ A poor, unhappy woman, I know not what to do :
Hildeburg, my dearest, your mind now let me know ;
To hide me were it better, or shall I stay to shame me
When they shall find me toiling ? Rather would I that they
a drudge should name me.”

Then said the maiden Hildeburg: "E'en how it stands you see;
A thing that is so weighty you should not leave to me,
Whate'er you think the better, your choice will I be sharing;
With you I'll stay forever, both good and ill together with you
bearing."

Then from the water turning, both fled away in haste;
But now the boat of the sailors had neared the land so fast,
They saw the lovely washers, away from the seashore hieing,
And at once bethought them that they for shame away from
the clothes were flying.

They called unto the maidens, as they sprang upon the beach:
"Whither so fast are you fleeing, fair washers, we beseech?
We are far-off wanderers, as well our looks are showing;
Your linen may be stolen, if you leave it here, and from us
in haste are going."

They kept their way still swiftly, as if they heard it not:
But yet the boisterous shouting had reached their ears, I wot.
The bold and knightly Herwic too roughly bade them hear him,
For he not yet mistrusted 't was his betrothed that now
he saw so near him.

Cried Herwic, lord of Sealand: "Maidens fair and young,
Tell us now, we pray you, to whom these clothes belong.
We ask you in all honor, by the faith to maidens owing,
Most fair and lovely ladies, that back to the shore you will
again be going."

Gu-drun, the maid, then answered : “ It were a shame, forsooth,
Since to the trust of woman you give your pledge in truth,
Were I of this unworthy, nor faith in you were showing :
To the shore we back will hasten, although my eyes with tears
are overflowing.”

They, in their smocks, came nearer ; both with the sea were wet.
Before that time, the maidens were always clean and neat ;
Now the wretched drudges with cold and frost were quaking ;
Little of late had they eaten, and with the March-like winds
were chilled and shaking.

The time had come already for snows to melt away,
And, with each other vying, the little birds, each day,
Again their songs would warble, as soon as March was ended ;
But in the snow, and ice-cold, the maids were found forlorn,
and unbefriended.

Stiff were their locks and frosted, when they now drew near ;
However well and carefully they had smoothed their hair,
It now was tossed and tumbled by the wind so wildly blowing :
Hard bestead were the maidens, toiling there, whether it rained
or was snowing.

The ice was loose and broken, floating everywhere
Upon the sea before them. The maids were filled with care ;
Pale were now their bodies, e'en as the snow around them,
By their scanty clothes scarce hidden. Sad was the lot
in which the knights had found them.

Then the high-born Herwic a kind "Good-morning" bade
To the sad and homeless maidens ; of this sore need they had,
For oft their keeper, Gerlind, had them with harshness taunted.
To hear "Good-morning," "Good-evening," was now to the maids
but very seldom granted.

Then said the youthful Ortwin : "I beg you say to me
To whom belongs this clothing, that on the sands I see ?
For whom are you here washing ? You both are so comely showing,
Who can this shame have done you ? May God bring low the man
such outrage doing !

"So fair are you and lovely, you well might wear the crown ;
If all that is your birthright you now could call your own,
You would, in truth, be worthy to be with ladies seated.
Has he for whom you are toiling more such washers fair
so foully treated ?"

To him the lovely maiden in greatest sorrow spoke :
"Many he hath beside us who fairer still do look.
All that you list now ask us ; yet, with eye unsleeping,
One from the leads doth watch us, who ne'er will forgive
the talk with you we're keeping."

"Be not at this uneasy, but deign our gold to take,
And with it these four arm-bands. These your reward we make,
If you, most lovely ladies, of speech will not be wary ;
To you we give them gladly, if of the truth we seek you be
not chary."

“God leave to you your arm-bands, albeit you we thank ;
Nought for hire may you give us,” quoth the lady high in rank.
“Ask what you will, but quickly, for we must hence be going ;
If we were seen here with you, nothing but sorrow should we
then be knowing.”

“We beg you first to tell us who this land doth own ?
Whose are the castles also ? By what name is he known
Who leaves you without clothing, low tasks upon you laying ?
He may of his worth be boastful ; that he doeth well no man
may now be saying.”

To him Gu-drun thus answered : “Hartmut is one of the lords
To whom these lands owe fealty. His castles well he guards,
With Ludwig, king of the Normans, who is Hartmut’s father :
And many knightly vassals, to keep their lands from foes,
they round them gather.”

“Gladly would we see them,” said Ortwin, the friendly knight ;
“Happy were I, fair lady, if we could learn aright
Where, within their kingdom, we might those kings be meeting.
We bring to them an errand ; as henchmen of a king, we bear
his greeting.”

Gu-drun, the high-born lady, thus to the warrior spake :
“This very morning early, ere yet they were awake,
I left them in their castle ; in their beds they slumbered.
I know not if thence they have ridden : their men, I think, full
forty hundred numbered.”

Again King Herwic asked her : “ To us yet further tell,
Why is it such brave princes in fear like this should dwell,
That they so many warriors always should be needing ?
Had I that band of fighters, to gain a kingdom I would them
be leading.”

To him Gu-drun thus answered : “ Of that we knothing know ;
And where their lands are lying, that neither can we show :
But from the Hegeling kingdom, although it is not near them,
They fear that harm awaits them from foes who soon may come,
who hatred bear them.”

Trembling, cold, and shivering, the maids before them stood ;
Then the knightly Herwic spake, in kindly mood :
“ I would, most lovely ladies, if we might be so daring,
And if no shame it gave you, that on the shore our cloaks
you would be wearing.”

Hilda's daughter answered : “ May God your kindness bless ;
We cannot take your mantles, but we thank you none the less.
No eye shall ever see me manly clothing wearing.”
If only the maidens knew it, much greater ills would they yet
be often bearing.

Oft the eyes of Herwic did on the maiden rest ;
To him she seemed most comely, and her bearing was the best.
For all her heavy sorrows sighs in his heart were wakened ;
And to one erst thought of kindly, from him long taken,
he the maiden likened.

Then spake again young Ortwin, who was of Ortland king :
“ Can either of you ladies tidings whatever bring
Of a band of homeless maidens who to this land were carried ?
Gu-drun was one among them, and gladly would we learn
where she has tarried.”

To him the maiden answered : “ To me is that well known ;
A maiden throng came hither in days now long bygone :
They to this far-off kingdom by fighters bold were taken ;
And full of heavy sorrow came these maids forlorn,
of hope forsaken.

“ The maid whom you are seeking I know,” she said, “ full well ;
I here have seen her toiling, this for a truth I tell.”
She was herself the maiden who was by Hartmut stolen,
Gu-drun, Queen Hilda’s daughter, and all she told had erst
herself befallen.

Then spake the knightly Herwic : “ Ortwin, list to me :
If fair Gu-drun, your sister, yet alive may be,
In any land whatever, for us on earth still watching,
This must be that lady ; ne’er have I seen two maids
so nearly matching.”

To him then said young Ortwin : “ The maid in truth is fair,
But to my long-lost sister no likeness doth she bear.
The days are not forgotten when we were young together ;
Should I rove the whole world over, so fair as she I ne’er
could find another.”

When now Gu-drun, who listened, heard the name of the man,
That his friend did call him Ortwin, she looked at him again :
For she indeed were happy if she were thus befriended,
And found in him a brother, for then her cares were o'er
and her sorrows ended.

“ However they may call you, a worthy knight are you :
A man in all things like you in days of yore I knew ;
The name of Herwic bore he, in Sealand was his dwelling.
If that brave knight were living, to loose us from our bonds
he were not failing.

“ I am one of the maidens whom Hartmut's warriors stole,
And bore across the waters, in thraldom sorrowful.
Gu-drun you here are seeking, but need not thus have hasted ;
The queenly Hegeling maiden at last is dead, with toil
and hardship wasted.”

The eyes of Ortwin glistened, filling fast with tears ;
Nor was it without weeping that now King Herwic hears
The tidings to them given, — that fair Gu-drun, their lady,
From them by death was taken ; at this their heavy hearts
to break were ready.

When both, before her weeping, were seen by the homeless maid,
With eyes upon them fastened, thus to them she said :
“ It seems to me most likely, by the mood that you are wearing,
That to Gu-drun, the maiden, you worthy knights are love
and kinship bearing.”

To her young Herwic answered : “ Yes, for the maid, forsooth,
I shall pine till life be ended ; to me she gave her troth,
And to me, in wedlock plighted, with faithful oaths was given :
Since then, by the craft of Ludwig, her have I lost, by him
from her birthland riven.”

Then said the sorrowing maiden : “ Your words would me mislead,
For men have often told me that Herwic long is dead.
No bliss on earth were greater, that God to me were granting,
Could I learn that he is living ; a friend to lead me hence
were then not wanting.”

Then said the knightly Herwic : “ Upon my hand now look ;
Know you this ring I am wearing ? Mine is the name you spoke ;
With this were we betrothed : to Gu-drun I am faithful ever,
And if you were my loved one, I would lead you hence, and
would forsake you never.”

Upon his hand then looking, a ring there met her sight,
Set with a stone from Abalie, in gold that glittered bright ;
Never her eyes had rested on one more rich or fairer.
Gu-drun, the queenly maiden, of this same ring had whilom
been the wearer.

The happy maiden, smiling, with words her bliss did show :
“ Of this I once was owner, and well the ring I know.
Look upon this I am wearing ; ’t was the gift of my early lover,
While I, a gladsome maiden, still dwelt at home, nor stepped
its borders over.”

He, on her hand now gazing, upon the ring did look ;
Then unto the maiden the knightly Herwic spoke :
“That a queenly mother bore thee, I see by many a token ;
After my heavy sorrows, a blessed sight upon my eyes
has broken.”

Then in his arms he folded the fair and high-born maid :
For all they told each other they were both glad and sad.
He kissed the maiden fondly, how oft I cannot reckon ;
So, too, he greeted Hildeburg, showing his love to both
the maids forsaken.

Then the youthful Ortwin begged the maid to say
Whether to do her task-work there was no other way
Than, standing by the seaside, all day to wash the clothing ?
At this she greatly sorrowed, and felt for her work the
deepest shame and loathing.

“Tell me now, fair sister, where may your children be
Whom you have borne to Hartmut, in his land across the sea,
That all alone on the seashore to wash they thus allow you ?
If here a queen they call you, the name you bear but little
good can do you.”

Shedding tears, she answered : “How should I have a child ?
No love could Hartmut kindle, that I to him should yield ;
And well do all men know it who near him here are dwelling.
Because I would not love him I now must toil, and woe
my heart is swelling.”

Then spake the knightly Herwic : “ We now can truly say
That we good luck have met with, on our errand far away ;
And nought could have befallen that for us were better.
It behooves us now to hasten to free the maid from the ills
that here beset her.”

Then said the knight, young Ortwin : “ That may never be.
Had I a hundred sisters, I would sooner let them die
Than here, in another’s kingdom, to hide a deed of plunder ;
Stealing those from our foemen whom they by stormy fight
from us did sunder.”

Then spake the lord of Sealand : “ This do I greatly fear,
Should our search be known to any, or if they find us here,
They then may take the maiden, and her far hence may carry,
And never shall we see her : ’t were best to hide the deed,
nor longer tarry.”

Him did Ortwin answer : “ How can we leave in need
Her faithful band of maidens ? So long a stay they’ve made
Here in this land of foemen that well may they be weary :
Gu-drun, my worthy sister, should ne’er forsake her maids,
in bondage dreary.”

To him then spake brave Herwic : “ Is this in truth your mind ?
Ne’er shall my well-belovéd be left by me behind ;
To take the ladies with us, e’en as we can, ’t is better.”
Him did Ortwin answer : “ Here to be hacked with the sword
for me were fitter.”

Then said the downcast maiden : “ What have I done to thee,
My dearest brother Ortwin ? Never as yet in me
Was seen such ill-behavior that I for that was chidden.
For what great sin I know not am I, my lord, to make atonement
bidden ? ”

“ I do not thus, dear sister, for want of love to thee ;
Thereby your band of maidens I shall the better free.
Only as fits my honor, hence will I ever take you ;
Herwic for your lover you yet shall have, and ne’er
will he forsake you.”

Gu-drun was heavy-hearted as they went on board the boat ;
She said : “ Woe worth my wanderings ! my sorrow endeth not.
He whom once I trusted, must hope in him be shaken
That he will break my bondage ? My bliss is yet far off,
and my faith mistaken.”

In haste the daring warriors turned from the shore away.
Gu-drun, the maid, heart-broken, to Herwic called to stay :
“ Of me you once thought highly, but now you hold me lightly :
To whom, in my woe, do you leave me ? Bereft of kin, to whom
can I trust me rightly ? ”

“ I do not hold you lightly ; you are of maids the best.
My coming, queenly lady, hide within your breast ;
Again, ere morning lightens, these shores will I be treading, —
For this my troth I pledge you, — eighty thousand followers
with me leading.”

As fast as they were able they hastened then away ;
Never friends were sundered more sadly than that day
Were these from one another ; (the truth to you I'm telling.)
As far as their eyes could follow, the maidens watched
the boat away fast sailing.

Gu-drun, the queenly maiden, her washing now forgot ;
Betwixt her bliss and sorrow, her toil she heeded not.
The harsh and wicked Gerlind, the idle women spying
Standing by the seashore, in anger stormed, that her clothes
unwashed were lying.

Then said the maiden Hildeburg, from Ireland, o'er the sea :
" Why do you let the clothing here uncared for be ?
The clothes of Ludwig's followers still unwashed are waiting.
If this be known to Gerlind, yet harder blows from her
shall we be getting."

Queen Hilda's daughter answered : " Too proud I am, I ween,
That for the wicked Gerlind I e'er should wash again.
Henceforth a toil so lowly in scorn shall I be holding,
For two young kings have kissed me, they in kindness me in their
arms enfolding."

Then Hildeburg made answer : " Scorn not that I should teach,
Or that I now would show you how best the clothes to bleach :
We must not leave them yellow, but carefully must whiten ;
Else do I greatly fear me our backs with blows and stripes
will well be beaten."

Then said old Hagen's grandchild : " At last my lot is bright,
With hope and gladness beaming. If they my back shall smite
With rods, from now till morning, I trow it will not kill me ;
But soon shall those who wronged us know themselves the ills
they chose to deal me.

" These clothes I should be washing down to the tide I 'll bear,
And fling them into the water," said the maiden fair ;
" Their freedom I will give them, even as 't is fitting
That I, a queen, should do it ; hence they may float away,
no hindrance meeting."

Whate'er was said by Hildeburg, Gu-drun the clothes then took,
That Gerlind her had given ; her task she would not brook,
But far into the billows she threw them, strongly hurling :
I know not if ever she found them ; they soon were lost to sight,
in the waters swirling.

The night was drawing nearer, and the light began to wane ;
To the castle, heavy-laden, went Hildeburg again.
Seven robes of finest linen she bore, with other clothing ;
Gu-drun, young Ortwin's sister, with Hildeburg went also,
bearing nothing.

When they had reached the castle, the time was very late.
Before King Ludwig's palace, standing at the gate,
They saw the wicked Gerlind, watching there to meet them :
Soon as she saw the washers, with words of bitter scorn
she 'gan to greet them.

Thus she spake in anger: "What does this gadding mean?
Stripes upon your bodies you both have earned, I ween,
Thus upon the seashore, in the evening light, to wander;
For me it were unseemly into my room to take you,
after loitering yonder."

She said: "Now tell me quickly, think you this is meet?
You spurn the greatest princes, and show them nought but hate,
But linger yet, at nightfall, with low-born varlets flirting.
Would you be thought of highly, know you that this your own
good name is hurting."

The well-born maiden answered: "Why speak of me so ill?
Never have I, poor maiden, had the thought or will
With any man to tattle, however dear I held him,
Unless it were a kinsman; a talk with him I rightfully
might yield him."

"Say you I chide you wrongly? Hush, you idle jade!
For this, to-night, I tell you, a reckoning shall be made.
To be so bold and shameless you then will dare no longer;
Before with you I've ended, your back shall feel that I
than you am stronger."

"In that will I gainsay you," said then the maiden proud;
"Again with rods to beat me you ne'er shall be allowed.
You and all your kindred in birth are far below me;
You may yet for this be sorry, if treatment so unseemly
you shall show me."

Then spake the wolfish Gerlind : “ Where is my clothing left,
That, folded in your apron, you thus your hands have wrapt;
Bearing yourself so idly, now from toil thus turning?
If I live a little longer, another kind of work shall you
be learning.”

King Hagen’s grandchild answered : “ Down by the deep sea-flood
I left your clothing lying. It was too great a load;
I found the weight too heavy, alone to the house to carry.
If never again you see them, but little I care, the while
with you I tarry.”

Then quoth the old she-devil : “ All this shall help you not;
Before I sleep this evening, bitter shall be your lot!”
Then were tied, at her bidding, rods from hedges broken;
Gerlind would not give over the training hard ’gainst which
the maid had spoken.

Then strongly to a bedstead she bade them bind the maid,
And alone in a room to leave her, where not a friend she had:
There should she be beaten, till skin from bone was falling.
When this was known to her women, they all began to weep,
and loud were wailing.

Then spake Gu-drun, with cunning : “ Now list to what I say:
If I with rods am beaten thus shamefully to-day,
Should e’er an eye behold me with kings and princes seated,
And I a crown be wearing, to you a fit reward shall then
be meted.

“Henceforth for me such teaching ’t were best you let alone ;
Sooner the king I ’ve slighted shall have me for his own :
Then as queen of Normandy here will I be dwelling ;
And when I here am mighty, what I will do may no one
now be telling.”

“Be this your will,” said Gerlind, “angry no more I ’ll be :
E’en if a thousand garments you thus had lost for me,
I would, in truth, forgive it ; well you will have thriven
If to my son, young Hartmut, the Norman prince, your love
at last be given.”

Then said the lovely maiden : “I now would take some rest ;
This care and heavy sorrow my strength doth sorely waste.
Send for the young King Hartmut, bid him be hither speeding,
And say, whate’er he wishes, that I henceforth will always do
his bidding.”

Those who heard them talking, straightway to Hartmut ran,
And to the youthful warrior told the tale again.
Some of his father’s liegemen there with him were seated,
When word to him was given in haste to seek Gu-drun,
who for him waited.

Then said the one who told him : “Give me now my fee ;
Queen Hilda’s lovely daughter will grant her love to thee.
She bids you now to hasten at once to her in her bower ;
No longer are you hated, for better thoughts she harbors
than of yore.”

The high-born knight then answered : “ To lie you have no need.
If true indeed were your tidings, well should you be feed ;
By me would three great castles and a hide of land be given,
With sixty golden arm-bands ; while bliss thenceforth my days
should long enliven.”

Then said to him another : “ This tale, I know, is true ;
The fee should I be sharing. At court they wish for you ;
Gu-drun, the maid, has said it. To love you she is ready ;
And if in truth you wish it, she in your land will be
your queen and lady.”

To those who told the tidings his thanks young Hartmut gave ;
From off his seat, o'er-gladdened, upsprang the warrior brave.
He thought that, in His kindness, God this boon had done him,
And, with a heart now happy, he sought the maiden's bower
who love had shown him.

In garments wet there standing, was seen the high-born maid ;
With eyes still dim with weeping, greeting to him she said.
Forward she came to meet him ; and now so near was standing
That he, in fondness turning, her in his arms would clasp,
towards her bending.

She said : “ Not so, King Hartmut, this you may not do ;
For men in truth would wonder if they should look on you.
Nought am I but a washer ; in scorn would they be holding
You, a king so mighty, if in your arms Gu-drun you should
be folding.”

“This will I, Sir Hartmut, freely to you allow,
When, by my crown, your kinsmen me as a queen shall know.
No longer shall I scorn you, when I that name am bearing :
For both will this be fitting ; me in your arms to take
you may then be daring.”

Then, with all good-breeding, he farther off withdrew,
And thus Gu-drun he answered : “Maiden fair and true,
Since now you deign to love me, richly will I reward you ;
Myself and all my kinsmen, whate’er you bid, will kindness
show toward you.”

Then said to him the maiden : “Such bliss I never knew.
If, after my weary toiling, I aught may ask of you,
This first of all I wish for, that I, poor wretched lady,
This night, before I slumber, may have for me a restful
bath made ready.

“And list to me yet further : another boon I crave ;
’T is that my friendly maidens I now with me may have.
Among Queen Gerlind’s women you will find them, sad and weary ;
But in their room no longer those toiling ones away from me
must tarry.”

“Your wish I grant you freely,” the young King Hartmut said.
Then from the room of the women the many maids were led ;
With hair unkempt and streaming, and scanty clothing wearing,
They to court betook them : for them the wicked Gerlind
nought was caring.

Of these came three and sixty ; on them did Hartmut look.
Then Gu-drun, the high-born, with lofty breeding spoke :
“ Behold, my lord, these maidens ! Is it your worth befitting
That they are thus uncared for ? ” He said : “ No more shall they
the like be meeting.”

Then spake the high-born lady : “ Hartmut, for love of me,
I beg that these my maidens, whom here in shame you see,
May have a bath made ready. Let now my word be heeded ;
You ought yourself to see them decked in the comely clothes
they long have needed.”

To her then answered Hartmut, of knights a worthy one :
“ Gu-drun, belovéd lady, if clothes the maids have none
Erst by them brought hither, when they their home were leaving,
To them yet other clothing, the best in all the world, will I
be giving.

“ Gladly would I see them, with you, more fitly clad.”
Then by those in waiting baths were ready made.
Among the kin of Hartmut chamberlains many were there ;
To help Gu-drun they hastened, thinking that later she their
hopes would further.

Gu-drun and all her maidens were by the bath made glad ;
Then the best of clothing that any ever had
To all the homeless women alike was freely given.
The lowliest one among them might gain the love of a king,
if she had striven.

When they their bath had taken, wine to them was brought ;
In all the land of Normandy none better need be sought ;
And soon the weary maidens the best of mead were drinking.
To Hartmut thanks were given ; to gain such praises how could
he e'er be thinking !

Soon the lovely maiden was seated in the hall.
Gerlind bade her daughter then, with her maidens all,
To don their clothing quickly, the finest and most fitting,
If they Queen Hilda's daughter wished to see, among her
maidens sitting.

At once the well-born Ortrun clothed her in her best ;
To seek Gu-drun then straightway gladly did she haste.
The grandchild of wild Hagen quickly went to meet her ;
When they saw each other, the happiness of both
was never greater.

Each one kissed the other, 'neath a band of gold on her head ;
The hue of both was brighter for the golden light they shed.
Each in her way was happy ; Ortrun's eyes were beaming,
To see the high-born washer in finest clothes now clad,
so comely seeming.

The poor Gu-drun was blithesome, as we have said before,
That soon her friendly kinsmen she would see once more.
The maidens sat together, with playful talk now gladdened ;
Whoever looked upon them might gain a happy heart,
however saddened.

“T is well for me,” said Ortrun, “that I have lived till now,
When as the wife of Hartmut you here yourself will show.
To one who loves my brother gladly will I give her
The crown of my mother, Gerlind, that I of right should wear
did I outlive her.”

“Ortrun, may God reward you,” thus the maiden spake;
“Whatever you shall bid me, that will I do for your sake.
You have bewept so often the sorrows I was bearing,
From you will I ne’er be sundered, and every day shall you
my love be sharing.”

Then with maiden wiliness spake the fair Gu-drun:
“Now you ought, Sir Hartmut, to send out runners soon,
Through all the Norman kingdom, to give to friends your bidding,
As many as will hear it, to come to your palace now, to see
our wedding.

“When peace is in your borders, this to you I say,
Before your host of warriors I will wear the crown one day.
How many he has who woos me thus shall I be knowing;
Then before your liegemen myself and all my kin will I be
showing.”

The maid in truth was crafty; from the castle on that day
A hundred men or over did Hartmut send away.
So, when the Hegeling fighters should for him be seeking,
Fewer foes should meet them: for this was Gu-drun
their going thence bespeaking.

Then spake the old Queen Gerlind : “ Now, fair daughter mine,
You two must leave each other ; when another morn shall shine,
Then may you be together, with none your bliss forbidding.”
She left Gu-drun, low bowing, and begged that God would her
in his ways be leading.

Then did Hartmut leave her. All hearkened to her word ;
They gave to the maiden cup-bearers, and carvers at the board :
The high-born lady's wishes they bade should well be heeded ;
Nor food nor drink she wanted : busy were they to bring her
all she needed.

Then spake one lovely maiden among the Hegeling band :
“ When we on this are thinking, how from our fatherland
Our foes have brought us hither, to live unblest forever,
We still are bowed with sorrow ; when in our homes, such woe
we thought of never.”

She then began a-weeping, where sat her lady fair.
When this was seen by others who stood beside her there,
They felt yet greater sorrow their heavy hearts now filling.
All then wept together ; but they saw their mistress,
fair Gu-drun, was smiling.

They thought that now forever they far from home must stay :
But their lady ne'er was thinking to bide so long away ;
They would, ere four days later, their freedom all be knowing.
The time had come already to whisper to Gerlind that they
would soon be going.

Beyond her went a little to laugh had the maid begun ;
For fourteen years now bygone she never bliss had known.
Of her glee the bad she-devil quickly now was hearing ;
She gave the hint to Ludwig, for care she felt, and anger
past all bearing.

She went at once to Hartmut, and said : " Oh, son of mine,
List to the truth I tell you ! throughout this land of thine,
All within it dwelling shall see both strife and toiling.
Why it is I know not, the fair young queen, Gu-drun,
is now so smiling.

" I know not how it happened, or how the news she heard,
But men sent out by her kinsmen hither to come have dared.
Therefore, knightly Hartmut, some way must you be choosing,
Lest, thro' the friends she looks for, your worthy name and life
you may be losing."

He said : " Be not so fearful. I grudge it not to the maid
That she, with all her women, should for a time be glad.
All her nearest kinsmen far from me are dwelling ;
What harm can they be doing ? I need not guard 'gainst ills
they may be dealing."

Gu-drun, now over-wearied, some of her maidens sent
To see if her bed were ready, for she on sleep was bent ;
For a night at least her sorrow she could now be leaving.
Then went with them most kindly King Hartmut's chamberlain,
his service giving.

Youths of the Norman palace before her bore the light ;
On her they ne'er had waited until that very night.
Thirty beds or over now were found made ready ;
Nice were they and cleanly, meet for Gu-drun and many a
well-born lady.

On them were pillows lying from far Arabia brought,
With green, like leaves of clover, and other hues, inwrought.
Bedspreads on them hanging were sewed in strips most fairly ;
And red as fire was shining the gold mixed in with
silken threads not sparely.

Beneath the silken bedspreads fishes' skins were laid,
To make them thicker and warmer. The fair and lovely maid,
Thither come from the Hegelings, Hartmut would be wooing,
For he as yet knew nothing of the harm to him that her
friends would soon be doing.

Then said the high-born maiden: "To sleep you now may go,
All you that wait on Hartmut; we, too, the same will do.
I, and my ladies with me, one night at least will rest us;
For, since our coming hither, freedom from hardest toil
hath never blest us."

All who there were gathered of Hartmut's knights and men,
The wise as well as youthful, thence to go were seen ;
They to rest then hasted, the ladies' bower now leaving.
Wine and mead unstinted to the homeless maids were others
freely giving.

Then said Hilda's daughter : " Now shut for me the door."
They barred the ladies' bedroom with heavy bolts full four :
The room was shut so tightly that what therein was doing,
However much one listened, outside he nought could hear,
nor might be knowing.

Awhile they all were seated, merrily drinking wine ;
Then said Gu-drun, the queenly : " Dearest maidens mine,
You well may now be happy, after your heavy sorrow :
Your friends I soon will show you ; on gladsome sights
your eyes shall feed to-morrow.

" Herwic, my betrothed, did I this morning kiss,
And Ortwin, too, my brother ; you now may think on this.
She shall soon be richer, and care from her be taken,
Who shall well be mindful, when night is over, me in the morn
to waken.

" You well shall be rewarded. To us glad days are nigh :
And freely will I give you castles strong and high,
And with them many acres ; for these shall I be gaining,
If I the day shall witness when, as a queen, I o'er my lands
am reigning."

They now lay down to slumber, with hearts all free from care.
They knew to them were speeding knights full brave to dare,
Who ere long would help them, and their woes would lighten.
To see them they were hoping, soon as to-morrow's sun the day
should brighten.



Tale the Twenty-Sirth.

HOW THE HEGELINGS LANDED NEAR LUDWIG'S CASTLE.

WE ask you now to listen to a tale as yet untold :
Ortwin still and Herwic their way did onward hold
Until they found their followers on the seashore standing.
Then ran these Hegeling liegemen to meet them on the sands
where they were landing.

Them they gladly welcomed, and bade that they make known
The news that they were bringing, and freely all to own.
First they asked of Ortwin, if he could them be telling,
If still Gu-drun were living, and if in Ludwig's land
she now was dwelling ?

The knightly Ortwin answered : " Of this I may not speak
To each and all that ask it ; the truth I will not break
Till all are met together ; then shall you be hearing
All that our eyes there greeted, when we to come near Hartmut's
walls were daring."

The word was told to others, and soon a mighty band
Of warriors brave and knightly around the two did stand.
Then to them said Ortwin: "Sad is the news I give you,
And, were my wishes granted, gladly I'd spare the tale,
for much 't will grieve you.

"List to what has happened, for wonders now begin;
Gu-drun, my long-lost sister, I, in truth, have seen,
And with her also Hildeburg, erst in Ireland living."
When he the tidings gave them, they thought the tale he told
not worth believing.

All then said together: "It is not well to jest;
For her we long have waited, and now our time you waste.
We hoped from Ludwig's kingdom you would bring her sooner;
To Ortwin and his followers belong the shame and blame
for wrongs still done her."

"Ask you, then, King Herwic: he, too, has seen the maid;
And he can also tell you what wrongs on us are laid.
Could you, my friends, bethink you of any shame that's greater?
We found Gu-drun and Hildeburg upon the seashore standing,
washing in the water."

Soon were his kindred weeping, all who there were seen.
At this the aged Wâ-te right scornful was, I ween:
"Truly for women only is such behavior fitting;
Why you weep you know not. This, in a knight, one never
should be meeting.

“ But if you are in earnest, to help Gu-drun in her need,
The clothes that she has whitened must you in war make red.
Erst white hands did wash them for men who must be bleeding ;
So you now may help her, and soon the maid forlorn
be homeward leading.”

Then said the Danish Fru-te : “ How can this be done ?
How can we reach their kingdom before our plan is known,
Before the men of Ludwig, and Hartmut's knights, are learning
That Hilda's friends are gathered, and toward the Norman land
at length are turning ? ”

Then said the aged Wâ-te : “ Hear what 't is best to do ;
I trust before his castle fitly to meet the foe,
If I may live to see him there before me standing.
Brave knights, your rest now leaving, soon on the Norman shore
must you be landing.

“ The air is fresh and gladsome, the sky is broad and bright,
And, well for us it happens, the moon will shine to-night.
From the sandy shore now hasten, my warriors bold and daring :
Before it dawns to-morrow, we King Ludwig's stronghold
must be nearing.”

Then they all were busy, when thus old Wâ-te spoke ;
Soon their clothes and horses on board the ships they took.
All the night still sailing, towards the land they hasted ;
And ere the morrow's daylight, before the castle, on the sands
they rested.

Hushed were all by Wâ-te, throughout the warlike band,
As soon as they to rest them lay down upon the sand.
To his water-weary followers leave for this was granted ;
Their shields about them spreading, on them they laid their
heads, for sleep they wanted.

“ Whoe’er to-morrow morning hopes to gain the fight
Must not,” said the aged Wâ-te, “ oversleep to-night.
For the struggle now before us we hardly can be waiting ;
As soon as morning lightens, then, good knights, the foe
must we be meeting.”

“ Further I give you warning : whoe’er my horn shall hear
Along the seashore sounded, soon as it meets his ear,
Let him at once make ready the foeman to be meeting.
When I shall blow at daybreak, no longer then may any
there be waiting.

“ When I again shall blow it, let each to this give heed ;
Quickly let his saddle be laid upon his steed.
Let him then be waiting, till I see ’t is daylight fully,
And the time has come for the onset ; let none hang back, but
meet the struggle truly.”

To do as Wâ-te bade them their word they gladly gave.
How many a lovely woman did he of bliss bereave !
For soon their dearest kindred unto death were wounded,
Who now were only waiting until the horn in the early
morning sounded.

"When you, my friends and kinsmen, thrice my horn shall hear,
Then, seated on your horses, must you your weapons wear;
Thus must you, brave warriors, wait, your steeds bestriding,
Till me you see, well-weaponed, under the fair Queen Hilda's
banner riding."

Now on the seashore weary lay they, one and all ;
Very near were they resting to old King Ludwig's hall.
Altho' the night had fallen, its towers they saw while waking ;
The brave and fearless warriors in stillness lay, no sound
or outcry making.

The early star of morning now had risen high ;
Then came a lovely maiden unto the window nigh.
She there was gazing skyward, to see when day was breaking,
That she might bring the tidings, and rich reward from fair
Gu-drun be seeking.

Ere she long had waited, there dawned on the maiden's sight,
With its wonted gleam on the waters, the early morning light ;
Then the sheen of helmets and many shields there flittered :
Foes had besieged the castle, and all the sands below
with weapons glittered.

Back then went the maiden to where Gu-drun she found :
 “Arouse, my queenly lady, wake from your slumber sound !
 The land is held by foemen, who will these walls be storming ;
 We have not been forgotten by those at home ; our friends
 come hither swarming.”

Gu-drun, the high-born lady, quickly sprang from her bed,
And, hasting to the window, to the maid her thanks she said.
“For this good news you give me, wealth shall you be earning.”
After her heavy sorrow, now for her friends Gu-drun was
sorely yearning.

Rich sails were seen to flutter near by upon the sea;
Then said the high-born maiden: “Ah, wellaway! Woe’s me!
Would that I ne’er were living!” the wretched one was sighing:
“Many a doughty warrior this day for me shall here
in death be lying.”

While thus she was bewailing, nearly all still slept;
But soon was one heard shouting, who guard for Ludwig kept:
“Be up, you careless warriors! your arms, your arms be taking!
And you, my king of Normandy! I fear that all too late
you will be waking.”

This the wicked Gerlind heard, as the warder cried;
Then, while fast he slumbered, she left the old king’s side.
Up to the roof of the castle then at once she hastened;
She thence saw many foemen, and on her devilish heart
great sorrow fastened.

Back again she speeded to where she found the king:
“Awake, my lord, make ready for guests who followers bring!
Now hem they in your castle, and well may they be dreaded:
That smile of young Gu-drun will cost your knights a strife
as yet unheeded.”

“Hush!” then answered Ludwig, “I will go myself to see;
We must all be bravely waiting for whatsoe’er may be.”
Then looked he from his castle, to see the foemen thronging;
His eyes by guests were greeted, on whom to look he never
might be longing.

Before his palace waving, he saw their banners spread;
Then said the old King Ludwig: “Let some one go with speed
And bear this news to Hartmut. I for pilgrims take them,
To sell their wares come hither; before my hall a market
would they make them.”

Then they wakened Hartmut, that he the tale might hear.
Outspoke that daring warrior: “Let none be sad or fear.
I see full twenty princes their blazoned banners bearing;
I ween these foes are coming to wreak the hate they long
’gainst us are wearing.”





Tale the Twenty-Seventh.

HOW LUDWIG AND HARTMUT MET THE HEGELINGS.

A SLEEP still left he lying all his faithful men.
He and his father Ludwig, the twain, to go were seen,
And, gazing from the window, they saw the throngs below them.
Quickly then said Hartmut: "Too near our castle-walls
methinks they show them.

"I ween they are not pilgrims, in truth, my father dear;
More like it is that Wâ-te and all his men draw near.
He from Sturm-land cometh, the lord of Ortland bringing;
The men I see are like them, as I know from the flag that they
to the breeze are flinging.

"I see a brown silk pennon, that comes from Karadé;
Before that flag is lowered, many will rue the day.
On it a head is blazoned, — as red as gold it glitters:
Guests so bold and warlike we well can spare; their sight
the day embitters.

“The Moorland king is bringing full twenty thousand men,
Knights as strong and daring as any I have seen ;
To win from us great honor methinks they now are craving.
There comes another banner, that o’er yet other knights
its folds is waving.

“It is the flag of Horant, the knight from the Danish land ;
I see with him Lord Fru-te, I know both him and his band.
And hither, too, from Waleis, many foemen leading,
Morunc now comes riding ; he, for the morning’s fight, o’er
the sands is speeding.

“I see another banner, on it a chevron red,
With sharpened spears within it ; for this shall many bleed.
Ortwin it is who bears it, from Ortland hither faring :
Erewhile we slew his father ; no kindly thought to us he now
is bearing.

“There floats another banner, whiter than any swan ;
Blazons bright and golden you well may see thereon.
It is our mother Hilda who sends it o’er the water ;
The hatred of the Hegelings will soon be known by me
who stole her daughter.

“There I see uplifted a flag outspreading wide ;
Of sky-blue silk ’t is woven. The truth I will not hide ;
Herwic bears this banner, he in the Sealands dwelling.
Sea-leaves are shown upon it ; he soon on us his wrath will
here be telling.

“There Irold, too, is coming, — this that I say is true, —
From Friesland leading many, as well indeed I know,
With fighting men from Holstein, warriors brave and daring.
A stormy fight is nearing; now in our castle all must arms
be wearing.”

Then cried Hartmut loudly: “Up, my faithful men!
If to these guests so warlike, who ’neath our walls are seen,
It may not now be granted to ride so boldly near us,
Then, before the gateway, with sword-blows we must greet them,
and bravely bear us.”

Then from their beds upsprang they all who yet did lie;
At once, to bring their war-gear, loudly did they cry.
The call to guard their master gladly they were hearing;
Forty hundred warriors showed themselves, their shining
armor wearing.

Ludwig and Hartmut with him armed themselves for fight:
To the sad and homeless maidens this was a sorry sight;
These within the castle uneasy hearts were keeping;
They said to one another: “Let him who smiled before
this day be weeping!”

Quickly came Queen Gerlind, old King Ludwig’s wife;
She said: “What will you, Hartmut? Would you lose your life,
With that of all your kinsmen who here our lot are sharing?
The foe will surely slay you, if to leave the castle-walls
you now be daring.”

The well-born knight then answered : “ Mother, stay within ;
You may not give your teaching to me or to my men.
Spare your words for women ; they mayhap will listen,
While they sit at sewing, making their silks with gold
and gems to glisten.

“ Now, mother, let us see you send Gu-drun to wash,
As you did before, with her maidens, where the billows dash.
You weened they all were friendless, and had no kindred living ;
You yet may see, ere nightfall, what thanks to us our guests
will yet be giving.”

Then spake his devilish mother : “ I did it for your sake,
Thinking her will to bridle. My bidding kindly take ;
Strongly built is the castle, let now the gates be fastened ;
They then will gain but little who on their toilsome way
have hither hastened.

“ Full well you know it, Hartmut, you bear the maiden’s hate,
For you have slain her kinsmen : your watch you must not bate.
It is not friends or kinsfolk who at our gates are knocking ;
The proud and warlike Hegelings, twenty to one of us, come
hither flocking.

“ Of this bethink you further, my well-belovéd son :
Bread we have in the castle and wine for every one ;
Food will not be lacking if here for a year we are staying ;
But if on the field you are taken, our foes will you from
bondage ne’er be freeing.”

Then to him spake further old King Ludwig's wife :
" Ever guard your honor, but do not lose your life.
Bid men to shoot with longbows at the loop-holes standing ;
So shall wounds be given, for which their friends at home
will tears be spending.

" Let slings with ropes be fitted ; we then will meet the foe
By hurling rocks upon them : knights we have enow.
Before with these new-comers you your swords are crossing,
Stones will I and my maidens bring in aprons white,
on them to be tossing."

Angrily spake Hartmut : " Lady, get you gone !
Why do you seek to lead me ? Is not my mind my own ?
Before my foes shall find me within my castle hiding,
Outside I would die far sooner, in fight with Hilda's men,
against me riding."

Then to him said, weeping, old King Ludwig's wife :
" I gave to you this warning that you might spare your life,
And guard yourself the better. Whoe'er is seen this morning
Beneath your banner fighting, rich gifts from us shall he
be fairly earning.

" Now arm ourselves," cried Gerlind, " stand by my son in fight ;
Strike from your foemen's helmets a glowing, fiery light.
Be always near your master, to help him ever striving ;
Fitley these guests to welcome, deep be the wounds that you
to them are giving."

Then to his men said Hartmut: "My mother's words are true;
If you to me are faithful, and strive your best to do,
And this day, in the struggle, to give your help are ready,
When fathers shall have fallen, a friend I'll be to sons
bereft and needy."

A thousand and a hundred within King Ludwig's halls
Now were all well-weaponed. Before from out the walls
Went any thro' the gateways, they left the stronghold guarded;
Still within it posted, five hundred warriors brave
the castle warded.

On four gates of the castle the bolts were backward thrown:
Ne'er had they been opened to a single spur alone.
Then with the youthful Hartmut, outgoing at his bidding,
All with helmets fastened, went thirty hundred followers
boldly riding.

The hour of strife drew nearer. He of the Sturmisch land,
Wâ-te, his horn was blowing; and loud across the sand,
For thirty miles or over, men the blast were hearing;
The fighters of the Hegelings, to flock to Hilda's flag,
their arms were wearing.

Once again he blew it: at this should all take heed,
That every knight among them then should mount his steed,
And each his men should gather to ride as they were bidden.
A knight so old as Wâ-te, and yet so brave, to the fight
had never ridden.

The third time that he blew it, he such a blast did make
That all the land was shaken, and the sea a sound gave back ;
Almost from Ludwig's castle the corner-stones were falling :
To raise Queen Hilda's banner Wâ-te to Horant then was loudly
calling.

They feared old Wâ-te sorely, none dared to speak aloud ;
A horse was e'en heard neighing. Upon the roof now stood
Herwie's well-belovéd, and saw the warriors daring,
Onward proudly riding, to wage the fight with Hartmut,
nothing fearing.

Hartmut rode to meet them ; he and all his men,
Bearing well their weapons, to leave the gates were seen.
Those from the windows gazing saw the helmets glisten
Of friends as well as foemen. Hartmut not alone to the fight
did hasten.

To all four sides of the castle the foes their banners bore ;
Bright in hue like silver was the armor that they wore ;
The bosses of their bucklers were seen to glitter brightly.
Much was Wâ-te dreaded ; no lion grim and wild
were feared more rightly.

The fighters from the Moorland were seen apart to ride,
And heavy shafts were hurling ; splinters were scattered wide.
When with the Norman foemen soon the fight did thicken,
Sharply from their weapons and from their breastplates
fiery sparks were stricken.

Then came the Norman Hartmut, riding before his men.
E'en had he been Kaiser, never would he be seen
To bear himself more proudly. In the sun was seen to glisten
All his shining armor. His boldness on the field not yet
did lessen.

When he was seen by Ortwin, the lord of Ortland's throne,
He said : " Will any tell us, to whom this knight is known,
Who is the daring fighter now against us turning?
He shows as bold a bearing as if to win a kingdom he were
yearning."

Then said one among them : "'Tis Hartmut whom you see ;
There indeed is a warrior ! a daring knight is he.
The selfsame foeman is he who erstwhile slew your father.
Where'er the strife is raging, a bolder man than he
there's not another."

Angrily spake Ortwin : " Me for his wrongs he owes,
And must atone full dearly before from here he goes.
The ills that he has done us must he be soon undoing ;
Gerlind cannot help him that he from hence may e'er alive
be going."

Down upon young Ortwin Hartmut riding bore.
Altho' he did not know him, deep he plunged his spur ;
His horse sprang forward widely, against brave Ortwin driven.
Both their spears were lowered ; fire on their armor flashed
from spear-strokes given.

No thrust against the other did either leave undone :
The war-horse then of Ortwin was on his haunches thrown ;
Soon, too, the steed did stagger whereon was Hartmut seated ;
They could not bear the onset of kings who rushed together,
to madness heated.

High upreared the horses ; a mighty clang arose
From clash of kingly sword-blades. Thanks were due to those
Who the fight thus opened, as knights beseemeth ever.
Brave were both and fearless ; to shrink from one another
thought they never.

On both sides came their followers, lowering their spears,
And bringing death to many ; each his foeman nears,
And in the shock of the onset heavy wounds was giving.
All of them were faithful, and well for a worthy name
they now were striving.

A thousand 'gainst a thousand, now the strife began
Of Hartmut's men with Wâ-te's, each man against his man.
Soon by the lord of Sturmland were they so badly treated
That whoso now came near him never a second time with him
was mated.

Now were thickly mingled of foes ten thousand men,
Among King Herwic's warriors ; they came in anger keen.
Their mood it was so stubborn that rather than be flying
Far from the field of fighting, they on the ground would first
in death be lying.

A knight indeed was Herwic ; what daring deeds he did !
Earnest was he in fighting, that so the lovely maid
Might be to him the kinder. But how could he be dreaming
The boon could e'er befall him, that the eyes of fair Gu-drun
on him were beaming ?

Ludwig, king of the Normans, and they of the Danish land,
Now had met together. Ludwig bore in hand
His strong and heavy weapon ; lordly was his bearing,
Yet he with all his followers to come too far without
the walls was daring.

There, with his men from Holstein, Fru-te, brave and bold,
Slew full many a foeman ; of this could much be told.
Now, too, from the land of Waleis, Morunc, many slaying,
Before King Ludwig's castle made rich the earth with the dead
he low was laying.

Irold, the youthful champion, a knight both true and good,
Slashed thro' foemen's armor, shedding their hot life-blood.
Under Hilda's banner was Wâ-te's kinsman fighting ;
Many in death grew paler as Horant thinned the crowd
he fast was smiting.

Now the young King Hartmut and Ortwin met again.
Thicker then than snow-flakes blown by the wind are seen,
The sword-strokes of the warriors upon each other lighted :
Thus it was that Hartmut once more by Ortwin on the field.
was greeted.

Gu-drun's young brother, Ortwin, was bold and brave enow,
But Hartmut through his helmet smote him a heavy blow ;
Over his shining breastplate soon the blood was streaming :
The followers of Ortwin sadly saw the flow, its brightness
dimming.

Great was the crush and uproar ; hand to hand they fought ;
Many wounds were gaping thro' rings of steel well-wrought ;
Many a head had fallen beneath the sword-strokes given :
Death was like a robber, that from their kin the
dearest friends had riven.

Now saw the Danish Horant that Ortwin from his foe
A bloody wound had taken ; then Horant bade them show
Who 't was that thus had wounded his master loved so dearly.
Hartmut at this was laughing, for both upon the field
had met too nearly.

Ortwin himself then answered : "'T is Hartmut this has done."
Then Hilda's banner was given by Horant to one of his own ;
Thinking thus the foeman he could harm the better,
And gain himself much honor : now he sought his foe
with boldness greater.

Hartmut heard around him a loud and stormy din.
On many of his warriors streams of blood were seen
Fast from wounds out-welling ; down to their feet 't was flowing.
Then cried Hartmut boldly : "For this shall you atone,
and this be ruing."

Now he turned him quickly where Horant met his sight ;
Then might one be seeing, so brave were both in fight,
How from their ringed armor sparks of fire were flying ;
Blunted were the sword-blades which they on each other's
helmets fast were plying.

Hartmut wounded Horant, even as he had done
Not long before to Ortwin ; a ruddy stream full soon
Ran from out his armor, at Hartmut's hand forth welling.
Strong indeed was his foeman ; who now to win his lands
could hope be feeling ?

Then in bitter struggle many, on either side,
Saw their bucklers shattered, tho' strong and often tried ;
Beaten were they and broken by sword-strokes quickly given
By each upon the other. Well to guard himself had
Hartmut striven.

Now the friends of Ortwin, and those of Horant, too,
Away from the field did lead them ; and care did they bestow
To bind their wounds wide-gaping ; no time for this they wasted.
Then again to the war-field the knights both rode ; once more
to the strife they hasted.

We now must leave them fighting as bravely as they will.
Who the day was winning, or whom his foe did kill,
Before King Ludwig's castle, none could yet be saying.
Grimly strove the Normans ; their foes, not less, for fame
were strength outlaying.

Of all that there befell them none may ever tell ;
But 't is not yet forgotten that many a knight there fell.
On every side were sword-blades heard together ringing ;
Foemen all were mingled, the slow with those who quick
in fight were springing.

Wâ-te stood not idle, that can I well believe.
He bade farewell to many, nor longer let them live ;
Cut down by him in the struggle, were they before him lying.
Fain were Hartnut's kinsmen to wreak their wrath for friends
who there were dying.

Now came Herwic nearer, so the tale is told,
And led against King Ludwig many a champion bold.
He saw that aged warrior his weapons bravely bearing,
Where he with all his liegemen, a wondrous host of foes
beat down, unsparing.

Herwic called out loudly : " Can any one now tell
Who is that fighting graybeard, who all his foes doth fell ?
Deepest wounds for many there his hand is hewing,
With bravery so fearless : women in tears will this erelong
be ruing."

When this was heard by Ludwig, outspoke that Norman foe :
" Who in the midst of battle seeks my name to know ?
I bear the name of Ludwig : for Normandy I'm fighting ;
Could I but meet my foemen, them indeed would I be sorely
smiting."

Then spake to him King Herwic : " This thou well dost earn :
Seeing thou art Ludwig, with hate for thee I burn.
For us, upon the sand-drifts, many knights thou wast slaying :
Thou slewest Hettel also ; a warrior brave was he, beyond
all saying.

“Still further thou hast wronged us, before thy day was done :
For this we still are mourning. I for my loss have known
Heart-heaviness and sorrow : thou hast my lady stolen
From me upon the Wulpensand ; and many knights for her
in death have fallen.

“I bear the name of Herwic : thou hast taken my hoped-for wife,
And again to me must give her ; else to give his life,
With that of many a liegeman, must one of us be willing.”
Then King Ludwig answered : “Too boldly thou in my land
in threats art dealing.

“Thy name, and this thy warning, thou hast no need to tell ;
There yet are many others from whom I took, as well,
Their goods and eke their kinsmen. To trust my word be ready,
In this I will not falter ; thou nevermore may'st hope to kiss
thy lady.”

When they thus had spoken, the kings no more did rest,
But sprang upon each other. If either got the best,
To hold it was not easy ; youths were forward pushing
Under both the standards, and daring knights to help
their lords were rushing.

A fearless king was Herwic, and long and bravely fought ;
But quickly Hartmut's father the youthful Herwic smote,
Till he began to stagger 'neath blows by Ludwig given,
Who gladly would have slain him, or would from out his lands
his foe have driven.

If Herwic's faithful followers so near him had not been,
And given help so quickly, never could he, I ween,
Have freed himself from Ludwig, or left the field yet living ;
So well that aged warrior to make young Herwic dread him
now was striving.

But help to him was granted, his life he did not lose ;
And, neither stunned nor wounded, he from his fall arose.
Then to the roof quick turning, his eyes he now was raising,
To see if, 'mongst the ladies, his heart's beloved had
on his fall been gazing.





Tale the Twenty-Eighth.

HOW HERWIC SLEW LUDWIG.

NOW said Herwic sadly : “ Ah, welaway ! Woe’s me !
If fair Gu-drun, my lady, my fall did lately see.
Should e’er the hour be coming when I shall clasp the maiden,
And as a wife shall own her, with blame and scorn shall I
by her be laden.

“Sorely doth it shame me, that now the gray old man
Thus has overthrown me.” Forthwith he bade again
His men to raise his banner, and ’gainst King Ludwig bear it ;
Then rushed they on the foemen, who might not flee the fight,
but all must share it.

Ludwig heard behind him an uproar loud and din ;
Then he turned him quickly, and Herwic sought again.
Soon he heard on helmets many sword-blows stricken.
Those who stood near Ludwig well might dread the wrath
that both did quicken.

They sprang upon each other, and fast and well they smote ;
Blows on blows loud sounded the stormy field throughout.
Who can tell how many now in death were lying ?
The day was lost to Ludwig, who there his strength with Herwic
would be trying.

Soon Gu-drun's betrothed reached over Ludwig's shield,
And smote him 'neath his helmet ; well his sword did he wield.
Him he sorely wounded, and strength no more did leave him ;
Grim death he there awaited until King Herwic should
of life bereave him.

Then Herwic with his broadsword smote the king anew ;
At once the head of Ludwig from off his shoulders flew.
Well repaid was Herwic for his shameful overthrowing ;
The king lay dead before him. For this fair eyes must soon
be overflowing.

Ludwig's faithful followers, after their king was slain,
His banner to the castle thought to bear again ;
But all too far from the gateway they had now been straying :
From them the flag was taken, and death must them erelong
with their lord be laying.

The watchman saw from the castle how Ludwig lost his life ;
Then was heard the mourning of knights and many a wife :
Their king, so old and mighty, they knew in death was lying ;
Gu-drun and all her maidens stood in the hall in fear,
and loud were crying.

As yet the Norman Hartmut, knew nothing of the tale,
How that the king, his father, and kinsmen young as well,
With many bravest warriors, now in death were sleeping.
Then he heard from the castle the shrieks and wails of those
who there were weeping.

Now the knightly Hartmut unto his followers said :
“’T is best we hence withdraw us ; how many here lie dead
Who in stormy fighting thought our men to be slaying !
Now will we seek the castle, and there until a better time
be staying.”

To him they listened gladly, and followed where he rode.
Great was the work of slaughter the field around them showed,
Where with grimpest foemen they were closely warring ;
Freely had blood been flowing beneath the hand of Hartmut
and his followers daring.

“ So well,” he said, “ have you helped me, who my kinsmen are,
That all my lands and riches gladly with you I ’ll share.
We now will ride to my castle, and there to rest betake us ;
Men the gates will open, and wine for us will pour,
and mead will make us.”

Fallen knights full many they left on the field behind :
Were these of the land the owners, still with no braver mind
They then had met the onset. Those for the gates now striving,
By Wâ-te and his thousand were not allowed to reach
the castle living.

He with a host of fighters near the gates was seen,
When Hartmut with his followers sought to come within ;
They in this were baffled, and their strength were wasting.
Those who the castle guarded heavy stones from off the wall
were casting.

They hurled them down so wildly on Wâ-te and his men,
Like hailstones they were falling, with not a stop between.
Wâ-te reeked but little how many were dead or living,
Might he the day be gaining ; to this alone his thoughts
he now was giving.

Hartmut saw old Wâ-te before the castle-gate.
He said : “ Tho’ from our foemen our gains this day are great,
Before it shall be ended, for this their hate they ’ll show us :
Let now the strong be heedful ; dead must many lie
on the field below us.

“ Fear and care it gives me that many here are seen
Whom we must now be meeting. Wâ-te with all his men
I see before the gateway, there with sword-strokes hewing.
If he of the gate be keeper, I look for little kindness
he ’ll be doing.

“ See for yourselves, my warriors, the gateways and the walls
By foes on all sides girded ; knight to knight there calls.
The roadways all are crowded, whichever way we ’re turning :
Gu-drun’s good friends and champions will spare no toil ;
to win the day they ’re burning.

“ That you may know too truly, as I see already well ;
Friends we must lose full many. Howe’er it so befell,
Before the outer gateway already see I waving
The Moorland foeman’s banner ; lest they get in, a care
must you be having.

“ Near to the second gateway I see yet other foes :
I saw Lord Ortwin’s banner, as on the breeze it rose.
Gu-drun’s young brother is he ; fair women’s smiles he ’s seeking :
Ere he shall cool his anger, beneath his blows will helmets
yet be breaking.

“ Now see I, too, brave Herwic, before the third gate there ;
With him seven thousand followers upon the field are near.
He comes in guise most knightly, to win his own heart’s lady ;
On him are gazing gladly the fair Gu-drun, and many
maids already.

“ To hasten back to my castle, the thought too late has come.
I know not where, with my warriors, now to seek a home.
I see the stern old Wâ-te before the fourth gate fighting ;
My many friends in the castle, I fear indeed must long
for us be waiting.

“ Fly from here I cannot ; no wings for this have I ;
Nor in the earth can hide me, whatever else I try.
Neither from the foeman to the waves can we be turning :
Now, in our lot so wretched, what best it is to do from me
be learning.

“Good knights of mine, now hearken ; there ’s nothing left to do
But, to the ground alighting, their hot life’s-blood to hew
From out the ringed armor : fear not the word I ’ve given.”
Then, from their saddles leaping, their horses back at once
from them were driven.

“Now on, brave knights and warriors !” Hartmut called to all ;
“To the castle-gates press nearer, whatever may befall.
I yet must meet old Wâ-te, whether I live or am dying ;
To drive him from the gateway, and from the walls, I will
at least be trying.”

Soon, with swords uplifted, rushing on were seen
The brave and youthful Hartmut, and with him all his men.
He fell upon grim Wâ-te, who met his coming gladly ;
Now their sword-blades clattered, and many knights lay dead,
or wounded badly.

When Wâ-te saw young Hartmut the onslaught on him make,
While Fru-te bore the banner, in wrath old Wâ-te spake :
“I hear the swords loud ringing of many pressing near us ;
I beg, dear cousin Fru-te, let none come out from the gates ;
from that now spare us.”

Then Wâ-te, wild with anger, did on King Hartmut run ;
But he, so brave and daring, the onset would not shun.
The sun with dust was darkened, now from the struggle rising :
Their strength was unabated ; still for good name they fought,
that both were prizing.

What helped it that of Wâ-te men said he was as strong
As six and twenty warriors? Though this was on each tongue,
Yet still to him young Hartmut his knightly skill was showing :
Howe'er his foe was striving, the Norman lord and his men
no less were doing.

A knight he was most truly, and well indeed he fought ;
Of the dead there lay a mountain whom on the field he smote.
It was, forsooth, a wonder that Hartmut had not yielded,
And died before old Wâ-te : grim was the wrath from which
himself he shielded.

Soon heard he, loudly shrieking, old King Ludwig's wife ;
Sorely she was mourning the loss of her husband's life.
She said she would reward him who felt his death past bearing,
And would Gu-drun be slaying, with all the maids who there
her lot were sharing.

Then ran a worthless fellow, to whom the fee was dear,
To where the Hegeling maidens sat together near.
Then the hearts of the women with many fears he loaded ;
For the sake of gold to be given, to take their lives he now
was sharply goaded.

When that Hilda's daughter against her saw him bear
A sharp and naked weapon, she well indeed might fear,
And mourn that, far from kindred, she was thus forsaken.
Had not young Hartmut seen it, the knave her head from her
would then have taken.

She so forgot her breeding that now she screamed aloud,
As if in dread of dying; great fear made wild her mood.
'T was the same with all her maidens, there beside her seated,
From out the window gazing; the ladies such behavior
ill befitted.

At once the sound of her wailing to Hartmut made her known;
And greatly did he wonder what made her scream and moan.
Soon he saw a ruffian whose sword was near to falling,
As if he meant to kill her. Loudly now to him 'gan Hartmut
calling:

“Who are you, low-born dastard? For what reward or need
Do you affright these maidens, and seek to strike them dead?
If you shall strike one lady, I give you now this warning,
Your life shall quick be ended; your kinsmen too shall hang,
this very morning.”

Back then sprang the rascal, — his anger he did fear;
For now the youthful Hartmut held his life not dear,
When to the homeless maidens he his help was giving:
With care was he o'rladen, while from grim death to free
them he was striving.

Quickly then came Ortrun, she of Norman lands,
The fair and youthful princess; in woe she wrung her hands.
She to Gu-drun came nearer, the stately, high-born maiden,
And, at her feet down-falling, bewept her father's death,
with sorrow laden.

She said : " Most queenly lady, do not your tears forbear,
For all my many kinsmen who death together share.
Bethink you, if you also a father slain were weeping,
How you would feel, great princess. My father slain I mourn,
in death now sleeping.

" Behold, most high-born maiden, my woe and bitter need ;
How almost all my kinsmen lie, with my father, dead :
And now the knightly Hartnut is death from Wâ-te fearing.
If I should lose my brother, bereft of kindred, nought could
life be cheering.

" Reward the love I've shown you," said the Norman maid.
" Of all that saw your sorrow, when none a tear did shed,
I then alone was friendly, and had you in my keeping ;
For all the wrongs they did you, I the livelong day for you
was weeping."

Queen Hilda's daughter answered : " Thou wast indeed my friend ;
But yet this strife so deadly I know not how to end.
Were I indeed a warrior, and knightly weapons wearing,
I'd stop the fighting gladly ; and none to slay your brother
then were daring."

Ortrun was sorely weeping ; she still the maid besought,
Until within the window Gu-drun at length she brought,
Who with her hand then beckoned, and begged that it be told her
If from the land of her fathers knights had come who did
in friendship hold her.

Then the knightly Herwic answer thus did make :

“ Who are you, young maiden, who news from us do seek ?

We are not the Hegelings, whom you see so near you ;

We hither come from the Sealands. Tell us, maiden, how we now
can cheer you ? ”

“ This do I beseech you, ” said the queenly maid :

“ Sore has been the fighting ; him will I thank, indeed,

Who now cuts short the struggle. Me will he be cheering

Who from the hands of Wâ-te will Hartmut free in the strife
that I am fearing. ”

Then asked the well-bred warrior who from the Sealands came :

“ Tell me, worthy maiden, what may be your name ? ”

She said : “ Gu-drun they call me, of Hagen’s blood I own me ;

Altho’ my birth was lofty, of late but little love has here
been shown me. ”

He said : “ If you, fair lady, my dear Gu-drun can be,

Then faithfully to help you gladness will give to me ;

For I, in truth, am Herwic ; you for my own I have chosen,

And fain am I to show you how you from bonds of sorrow
I can loosen. ”

She said : “ If you would help me, my good and worthy knight,
I trust that you will grant me that what I ask is right :

To me these lovely maidens their prayers are ever making,

That from the fight with Wâ-te some friendly hand will
Hartmut soon be taking. ”

“That will I do right gladly, dearest lady mine.”
Then to his men young Herwic called above the din :
“Now against old Wâ-te let my flag be carried.”
Herwic then pressed forward, and none of all his men
behind him tarried.

To do the lady's bidding hard it was for him ;
But Herwic called out loudly to Wâ-te old and grim,
And said, “My dear friend Wâ-te, to grant my wish be ready :
Let strife be ended quickly : this is the prayer of many
a lovely lady.”

Then spake in wrath old Wâ-te : “Sir Herwic, get you gone !
Did I mind the will of a woman, how should I do my own ?
If I thought to spare the foeman, unasked I'd do it even.
I will not do your bidding : Hartmut to pay for his sins
must now be driven.”

Herwic, for love of his lady, on both the fighters sprang
Right fearlessly and boldly ; loud the sword-blades rang.
Wâ-te was wild with anger, and bitter pain it gave him
That, ere the foeman yielded, Herwic from his hand should
dare to save him.

Then he smote King Herwic a strong and heavy blow,
Ere he could part the fighters, and quickly laid him low ;
Now rushed the men of Herwic, and did from Wâ-te bear him.
Hartmut was seized and taken, though Herwic and his knights
had sought to spare him.



Tale the Twenty-Ninth.

HOW HARTMUT WAS TAKEN PRISONER.

WÂ-TE loud was storming ; then went he towards the hall
That stood before the gateway. On every side did fall
The din of sword-blades clashing, of groaning and of weeping.
Hartmut was in bondage ; ill luck alone his liegemen, too,
were reaping.

With him were also taken eighty warriors brave ;
The others all were slaughtered. Hartmut his life did save,
But to a ship was carried, and fast and long they kept him.
Not yet was sorrow ended ; greater ills must they know
who now bewept him.

Though often from the stronghold Wâ-te's men they drove,
Both with slings and arrows, yet still he grimly strove,
And won from them the castle. The heavy bolts were broken
That once the gates had fastened ; at this fair women wept,
with fear outspoken.

Horant, the lord of Denmark, Queen Hilda's flag now bore ;
Him followed many warriors, he might not wish for more.
Up to a palace tower that high its walls was rearing,
Far above all others, the Hegeling men the banner
soon were bearing.

As I have told already, the castle now was won :
To those they found within it grimdest deeds were done.
Great was the crowd on-pressing, for booty to enrich them.
Then cried the stern old Wâ-te : " Where are now the sacks,
and youths to fetch them ? "

Now was broken open many a well-filled room ;
Loud was the din and uproar that from within did come :
But all were not like-minded who the halls were thronging ;
While wounds were dealt by many, others for plunder searched,
for riches longing.

They bore so much from the castle, as we have heard it told,
That such a heavy burden two ships could never hold :
Richest silken clothing, silver and gold, were taken,
To load the ships on the waters ; tho' much they took, yet much
must be forsaken.

Now within the castle joy was all unknown.
To all the folk there gathered the greatest wrongs were done ;
Men alike and women were slain who there were dwelling :
To children in their cradles, even to them, the foemen death
were dealing.

Irold then to Wâ-te thus his mind made known :

“ Of harm to you these children devil-a-bit have done.

They indeed are blameless, nor hate to our kin were showing ;

For the love of God, I beg you, spare the poor babes, some pity
now bestowing.”

The aged Wâ-te answered : “ Thou hast the mind of a child ;

Tho’ now in the cradle wailing, say, wouldst thou have willed

That I should leave them living ? As soon as they are older,

They never can be trusted ; to trust a Saxon wild would be
no bolder.”

Blood throughout the castle flowed on every side.

Those who saw the slaughter, how bitterly they cried !

Now the high-born Ortrun, filled with care and sorrow,

Sought Gu-drun, kind maiden : she feared yet greater wrongs
before the morrow.

Then, her head low bending before the lovely maid,

She said : “ Gu-drun, my lady, have pity on my need,

And, in my sharpest sorrow, leave me not forsaken ;

I trust me to your kindness, or else my life will by your
friends be taken.”

“ Gladly will I shield you,” she answered, “ if I can ;

Ever to do you kindness, and help you, I am fain.

I will gain for you forgiveness ; no more for life be fearing.

Your maids and women also must stand near me, my care
they, too, are sharing.”

“ This doth make me happy,” the youthful Ortrun said.
With three and thirty maidens, she was kindly kept and fed ;
Warriors two and sixty there the ladies guarded :
If they should gain their freedom, their keepers would be slain,
and thus rewarded.

The old and wicked Gerlind ran to Gu-drun in haste ;
As if she were her bondwoman, herself at her feet she cast,
Saying: “ Most high-born lady, thou alone canst save us
From Wâ-te and his followers ; ’ else will his wrath, I ween,
of life bereave us.”

To her said Hilda’s daughter: “ I hear you asking now
That I to you be friendly ; how should I kindness show ?
Nought that e’er I wished for to grant me were you willing :
To me you showed but hatred ; and now my heart with hate
for you is swelling.”

That Ortrun then was near him Wâ-te became aware :
He his teeth was gnashing, and straight up-stood he there ;
Now his eyes were flashing ; his yard-wide beard was flowing ;
And all were sorely frightened, and feared what the Sturmisch
lord would next be doing.

Over him blood was streaming, with it his clothes were wet.
Tho’ Gu-drun was glad to see him, she had liked it better yet
If he, in mood less wrathful, had come for her to greet him ;
Such fear they all were feeling, I ween that no one there
was glad to meet him.

To meet her friend, old Wâ-te, went Gu-drun alone ;
Then said Hilda's daughter, with sad and care-fraught tone :
" Welcome art thou, Wâ-te ! How glad would be my greeting,
If now these folk so many no evil from thy hand should here
be meeting."

" I thank you, fair young maiden ! Are you Queen Hilda's child ?
Who are these many women, whom here you seek to shield ?"
" This," said Gu-drun, in answer, " is Ortrun, high in breeding ;
I beg you, Wâ-te, spare her : her women here your wrath
are sorely dreading."

" Those there are wretched maidens, from far across the sea,
Brought from the Hegeling kingdom by Ludwig's men with me.
But you are wet and bloody ; do not come so near us :
For all your help we thank you, nor in our woe do scorn
the love you bear us."

Wâ-te went on further, and Herwic soon he found,
And with him youthful Ortwin, as king in Ortland owned.
Irold was there and Morunc ; Fru-te had thither hasted :
None of these were idle ; many they slew, nor soon from
slaughter rested.

Quickly then came Hergart, the lady of a duke,
And said : " Gu-drun, good lady, on me with kindness look, —
On me, a wretched woman. Forget not that we ever
Have been and are your handmaids ; and let me, lady,
lose thy friendship never."

Gu-drun in anger answered : " Stand back, come not so near !
Whatever we poor maidens of wrong have had to fear,
For all you wept but little, and cared for it but slightly.
Not much do I care either whether for you it now goes ill
or rightly.

" You still among my maidens may linger, if you choose."
Now the stern old Wâ-te looked round among his foes,
To find the wicked Gerlind, whom he in wrath was seeking.
That devilish crone, with her women, the kindness of Gu-drun
was now bespeaking.

Grimly then old Wâ-te stood before the hall,
And said : " Gu-drun, my lady, send down, with her maidens all,
The old and wicked Gerlind, who made you wash by the water ;
And with her send her kinsmen, who in our land so many
knights did slaughter."

The lovely maiden answered : " Not one of them is here."
Then Wâ-te, in his anger, went in and to her came near ;
He said : " Now show me quickly the women I am seeking ;
Else shall they, with your maidens, all alike in the grave
their home be making."

Wâ-te was sorely angry, of this was she aware.
A wink of her eye then gave him a lovely maiden there,
And he knew the old she-devil, on whom her glance was turning.
" Tell me," he said, " Queen Gerlind, for other maids to wash
are you still yearning ? "

Then by the hand he took her, and dragged her thence away ;
The while the wicked Gerlind sank down in sore dismay.
Said Wâ-te, wild to madness : " Most lofty queen, I warn you,
Never again, at your bidding, shall my ladies wash for you ;
they now can scorn you."

I ween that when he brought her without the palace gate,
All looked on to witness what he would do in his hate.
Then by the hair he grasped her, no one a whit he dreaded,
His wrath indeed was bitter, and at once the evil queen he
there beheaded.

Loudly shrieked the maidens, their fright at this was sore.
Back again went Wâ-te, and said : " Who is there more,
Who to the queen owns kinship ? To me you now must show her ;
However high she holds her, I yet to earth her head
will quickly lower."

Sobbing then and weeping, the child of Hettel said :
" Let these with me find shelter, who now to me have fled,
To ask of me forgiveness, here my love bespeaking.
This is the well-born Ortrun, who with her Norman maids
my help is seeking."

Those who were forgiven she bade stand further back.
Then, in mood unfriendly, the angry Wâ-te spake :
" Where shall I find young Hergart, now of a lord the lady,
Who here within this kingdom to take the love of the king's
great lord was ready ?"

None of them would tell him, but he to her came near,
And said : " Were you the owner of all this kingdom here,
Who could in you be looking to see so proud a bearing ?
Ill have you served your lady, here in the land where you
her lot were sharing."

Then all cried out together : " Let her now go free."
But the aged Wâ-te answered : " That can never be ;
I have the care of the women ; behold my overseeing !"
With a stroke he her beheaded, while the maids in fright
behind Gu-drun were fleeing.

Now from the bloody struggle there was a rest for all.
Then the brave King Herwic came to Ludwig's hall,
Leading in his warriors, with stains of blood upon them.
Gu-drun her welcome gave him ; her love for him was shown,
and kindness done them.

Soon the knightly Herwic his sword from his side unbound :
He then shook off his armor into his shield on the ground,
And stood before the ladies ; iron-stained was his body.
That day, for love of his lady, he oft on the field had hewn
a pathway bloody.

With him came Ortwin also, who was of Ortland king.
When Irold came with Morunc, the clothes they off did fling
Worn outside their armor, for they were over-heated.
They wished to see the ladies, and hoped by them they would
be kindly greeted.

When now the Danish warriors were both with slaughter spent,
They laid aside their weapons, and before the ladies went.
Shields no longer bore they, their helmets were unfastened ;
A very loving welcome to give to both the knights
Gu-drun then hastened.

Irold and Morunc with him then most lowly bowed
Before the lovely maiden. How well her bearing showed
That to see these guests so lordly she was indeed most willing !
Right glad and happy truly the child of the Hegeling Hilda
now was feeling.

Alike they all were thinking, both lords and all their men :
“ Since now we have the castle, — the stronghold Kassiane, —
Of the land are we the masters, and everything is ours.”
Soon bade the aged Wâ-te that men should burn with fire
the palace with its towers.

The Danish Fru-te answered : “ That may never be ;
In this my queenly lady to live must now be free.
Bid that from out the castle men the dead shall carry ;
Then 't will be the better for all our knights who in the
land shall tarry.

“ Very strong is the castle, wide it is and good ;
Bid from the walls now everywhere to wash away the blood,
That for a home the maidens may not dislike it wholly :
Then the land of Hartmut we will raid throughout,
and see it fully.”

They did as Fru-te bade them, for wise he was, in truth ;
They bore from out the castle many who there, forsooth,
Were sorely slashed and wounded, and many who were dying :
Then to the waves they carried those who before the gates
in death were lying.

They to the sea intrusted four thousand of the dead ;
This to them was toilsome, but Fru-te thus had bade.
The work that they were doing not as yet was ended ;
Then in Ludwig's castle the maid Ortrun was held,
now ill-befriended.

Two and sixty warriors and thirty maidens fair
With her were also taken. Then said Gu-drun : " Forbear !
The maids are in my keeping, my word to them I plighted :
Wâ-te may do as he wishes with the knights he seized,
until my wrongs are righted."

Siegfried, king of Moorland, found a welcome warm,
As should to knights be granted after the battle-storm.
Thanks to that worthy warrior were by the ladies given,
That he from the land of Karadie so far had come, and so well
for them had striven.

To the care of the Danish Horant they their foes did give
Who in the castle of Kassian still were left alive.
To him was Gu-drun intrusted, and all her maidens near her :
To her was he a kinsman ; they so might hope that he
would kindness bear her.

Him they made the master of forty towers strong,
And six wide, roomy dwellings, that stood the shore along.
Over three rich palaces to him was lordship granted,
And there Gu-drun, the maiden, with him must stay, and nought
she ever wanted.

To guard their ships on the waters others now they bade ;
Then back to castle Kassian Hartmut, the knight, was led
With many of his kinsmen, who in the fight were taken ;
There the Norman ladies, seized with the knights, were held,
by hope forsaken.

They bade that care be taken that none from them might flee ;
A thousand of their brave ones must the women oversee :
They, with the men from Denmark, kept guard in many places.
Wâ-te, meanwhile, with Fru-te, sought other foes, and shields
to hew in pieces.

Thirty thousand warriors with them the war-path shared.
Fire was thrown on all sides ; flames now flashed and flared.
Throughout the land, the dwellings everywhere were burning ;
And now the brave young Hartmut, sad at heart, his first
true woe was learning.

The warriors from Sturm-land, and they of the Danish land,
Broke down the well-built castles on every hill and strand.
They took away more plunder than foemen ever carried ;
Many lovely women the Hegelings seized, the while the land
they harried.

Before the friends of Hilda came back thro' the wasted land,
Six and twenty castles fell beneath their hand.
Happy went they homeward ; proud were they of their raiding ;
Soon of those there taken a thousand or more to Hilda
they were leading.

Throughout the Norman kingdom was Hilda's banner seen,
Waving now unhindered ; back again her men
Bore it down to the sea-sand, where they had left their lady.
Here would they stay no longer ; to seek their homes they all
were glad and ready.

Those who still were resting within King Hartmut's halls
Down to their friends came riding from out the castle walls.
Gladly both old and youthful now each other greeted ;
Then asked they of Denmark : " Youths, what luck in the raid
hath you awaited ? "

To them King Ortwin answered : " We there have done so well
That I to those who helped me my thanks must ever tell.
Our foes are well rewarded, tho' sore has been the fighting,
For all the wrongs they did us ; a thousand-fold have we
ourselves been righting. "

Then spake the aged Wâ-te : " Who best can tarry here
To guard for us this kingdom ? Bid now Gu-drun, the fair,
Come down again to meet us ; soon shall we be going
To Hilda's land of the Hegelings ; and what we bring we will
to her be showing. "

Then said they all together, both the old and young :
" To Horant and to Morunc doth the warder's task belong ;
They, and a thousand with them, here in this land must tarry."
'T was done as they had bidden ; but those who went did many
a hostage carry.

When to go back to Hegeling they now made up their minds,
Then to their ships they carried goods of many kinds,
All they once brought with them, and all they had of plunder.
Gladly they bore their booty ; on this their friends at home
would look with wonder.

Hartmut now was bidden to leave his father's hall,
With all his bravest warriors, five hundred men in all ;
They now were held in bondage who had in strife been taken,
And won from their foes thereafter many a weary day,
of hope forsaken.

Ortrun took they likewise, the fair and high-born maid ;
On her and on her maidens a heavy woe they laid :
As they away from fatherland far from friends were carried,
They well might know the sorrows felt by Gu-drun and her maids,
who with them tarried.

Those whom they had taken they bore with them away.
The castles, overmastered, henceforth must own the sway
Of Morunc and of Horant : when they homeward started,
They left in the Norman kingdom a thousand of their men,
all fearless-hearted.

“ Now do I beseech you,” to them young Hartmut spake,
“ That in my father’s kingdom my freedom I may take ;
If this to me be granted, I pledge my life and riches.”
The aged Wâ-te answered : “ Now in our hands to keep you
wisdom teaches.

“ Why it is I know not, that ’t is my nephew’s will
To carry home young Hartmut, who him would gladly kill,
And take from him his riches. Even before the morrow,
Were only my nephew willing, I would see that his foe no more
in bonds should sorrow.”

Then spake the youthful Ortwin : “ What gain to us would come
If we should slay our foemen here in their land and home ?
Hartmut and his kindred may better things be hoping ;
Them will I bring to my mother, as well beseems a knight
to wrong ne’er stooping.”

All their goods and riches down to the ships were brought ;
With gold and gems and clothing, and horses they were fraught.
Her whom they had sought for they were homeward bringing :
They who once went mourning now on their way were heard
in gladness singing.





Tale the Thirtieth.

HOW GUDRUN WAS BROUGHT HOME TO HILDA.

HOMEWARD the men of the Hegelings gladly took their way ;
But many whom they carried erewhile across the sea
Now lay dead and wounded ; these must they be leaving :
Three thousand men or over were mourned by friends, who
tears to each were giving.

Now their ships went smoothly, the winds for them were good :
Bearing home their booty they came in happy mood.
How it was done I know not, they sent on men before them
Unto the Hegeling ladies : of what had them befallen
they tidings bore them.

With all their speed they hastened, — that I well can say, —
And reached at last their kingdom, — I cannot tell the day.
Never a tale so happy had Lady Hilda gladdened
As this that now they told her : Ludwig was slain, who long
her life had saddened.

She asked : " Still lives my daughter, and all her maiden band ? "
They answered : " Herwic brings her, his own, again to her land.
Ne'er to so brave a warrior it hath befallen better.
Ortrun, too, they are bringing, and Hartmut, her brother ;
these in bonds they fetter."

" A happy tale you bring me," said then the well-bred queen ;
" My life with care and sadness by them hath cumbered been.
If e'er my eyes behold them, ill shall they be faring :
Through them have I much sorrow, untold and openly, for years
been bearing."

" The news that you have brought me a rich reward shall gain ;
For you my heart have lightened of hopeless woe and pain.
Gold I give you freely, and this I do most rightly."
They said : " Most noble lady, to make us rich we need
your gold but slightly."

" Of the booty we have gotten we're bringing home so much,
You need not think us scornful if your gold we do not touch :
Indeed, our boats are heavy with shining gold they're bearing.
Over all our riches keepers we have, who well for it
are caring."

Then did Lady Hilda, when she the tidings heard
That guests so dear were coming, for food and drink give word ;
For stools and benches, also, on which they should be seated.
She of all was thoughtful, that they might feel that they
were fitly greeted.

Now at Matelan castle none were idle found ;
Down on the sandy beaches and on the level ground
Workmen quickly gathered, who nought of toil abated
That fair Gu-drun and Herwic, as them beseemed, should worthily
be seated.

I cannot tell you truly if aught upon the sea
Of ill had them befallen. Six long weeks it must be
Ere Ortwin's men saw Matelan at length before them looming.
They brought with them their lady, and many well-bred maids
with her were coming.

When now they reached their homeland, this for truth we hear,
Their search and strife for the lady had lasted full a year :
It was upon a May-time their foes they home were bringing.
Their toils were not forgotten, but, as they came, the strand
with shouts was ringing.

Soon as Matelan castle now from the ships was seen,
Of sackbuts and of trumpets loud began the din,
Of horns as well as fluting, and drums that men were beating.
The ships of the aged Wâ-te at last in a harbor good
their rest were meeting.

After these came also Ortland's warriors brave ;
Then Hilda with her ladies to them a welcome gave.
Out from Matelan's castle she to the shore went riding ;
Gu-drun they saw was coming, with well-bred maidens wont to do
her bidding.

Alighted from their horses, and standing on the sand,
Were Hilda and all her ladies. Then, leading by the hand
Gu-drun, the lovely maiden, came Irold, proud and knightly.
Though Hilda well had known her, yet now she knew her not,
nor others rightly.

Hilda, among the followers a hundred women saw ;
She said : " I know not truly which one from me should draw
A mother's loving welcome ; unknown to me is my daughter :
I give to all my greeting who here with her have come
across the water."

" This is your long-lost daughter," by Irold she was told ;
Hilda to her stepped nearer. Could ever wealth or gold
Outweigh the bliss that filled them, as each the other greeted,
And welcome gave with kisses ? Now from their hearts had all
their sorrow fled.

To Irold and his kinsmen kind greeting Hilda said ;
Then to the aged Wâ-te a lowly bow she made.
" Welcome, knight of Sturmland ! bravely thou hast striven !
Who can e'er reward thee, unless to thee both land and crown
are given ?"

He to the lady answered : " To help you all I may,
For that am I most willing, e'en to my latest day."
Then, for love, she kissed him, and Ortwin thus she greeted.
Now came Herwic also, with proud and worthy knights,
as him befitted.

Ortrun, the Norman maiden, then by the hand he led.
Gu-drun besought her mother kindly to meet the maid :
“ Dear lady, greet with kisses this good and high-born maiden ;
Oft in my years of sorrow my life with help and kindness
she did gladden.”

“ To none will I give kisses who is to me unknown.
Who are this maiden’s kinsmen ? What name doth the lady own,
That you should bid me kiss her, and be so friendly with her ? ”
He said : “ Her name is Ortrun ; she from the Norman kingdom
cometh hither.”

“ Never shall I kiss her ; how can you ask for this ?
If I should bid them kill her I should not do amiss.
Truly have her kinsmen filled my life with sorrow ;
They fed their eyes upon it, and gladness all the while
from this did borrow.”

Gu-drun to Hilda answered : “ Ne’er hath this lovely maid
The word to any given that wrong on you be laid.
Bethink you now, dear mother, would blame to me be owing
Should our men slay her kinsmen ? To the luckless maid, I beg,
your love be showing.”

Gu-drun in vain besought her, until at last, with tears,
The maid now begged her mother ; then gave she willing ears,
And said : “ I can no longer see you sadly weeping :
If e’er the maiden helped you, for this shall she, in my land,
her life be keeping.”

Then the stately Hilda kissed King Ludwig's child,
And greeted other ladies, e'en as Gu-drun had willed.
Then came also Hildeburg, from far-off lands brought thither,
Erst with her found washing. Now, by the hand, Sir Fru-te
led her hither.

Then Gu-drun said further: "Mother, most dear to me,
Your greeting give to Hildeburg. What better can there be
Than true and faithful friendship? Gold and jewels even,
Whate'er the kingdom holdeth, to Hildeburg most rightly
should be given."

Then said to her Queen Hilda: "To me it hath been told
How she both weal and sorrow hath borne with you of old.
Never shall I sit happy beneath the crown I'm wearing,
Till I indeed reward her for all the ills that she with you
was sharing."

At once she kissed the maiden, and others, too, as well.
Then Hilda said to Fru-te: "No shame for this I feel, —
That I have come to meet you and those whom you are leading.
Good knights, you all are welcome into the Hegeling land,
now homeward speeding."

As they with thanks were bowing, and she her greeting gave,
Siegfried, king of Moorland, drew nearer on the wave,
And with his warriors, shouting, up to the beach was springing:
A merry song from Araby were all, as best they might,
together singing.

Queen Hilda him awaited till on the shore he stood.
Then to the lord of Karadie a greeting warm she showed :
“ Sir Siegfried, king of Moorland, welcome to you is given ;
It ne’er shall be forgotten how you to right my wrongs
have ever striven.”

“ Lady, if I have helped you, to do it I was glad.
Now must I hasten thither to where my home I’ve had
Since early days of boyhood, ere I thence had ridden
To war against King Herwic ; henceforth to strive with him.
it is forbidden.”

Then they their ships unloaded, and up they bore on the sand
The many things brought with them into Queen Hilda’s land.
The night was drawing nearer, the air was colder growing ;
The guests no longer waited : to seek a shelter they in haste
were going.

Then with the guests Queen Hilda rode up on to the plain.
Before great Matelan castle huts and tents were seen
Bedecked with gold and shining ; there the guests were seated
Upon rich seats made ready : within the tents were all
most kindly treated.

Such wealth, at Hilda’s bidding, was brought up to the land,
That none need leave behind him his pledge or bond to stand.
Never in giving freely could any host be vying
With this most high-born widow : no guest need wine or other
cheer be buying.

There the weary rested until five days were gone.
The greatest care and kindness unto the guests were shown ;
But Hartmut greatly sorrowed — no happiness it gave him —
Until the lovely maiden begged Queen Hilda would in freedom
leave him.

Then Ortwin went with his sister where Hilda had her seat.
She said : “ My dearest mother, never this forget, —
We must not reward with evil him who a wrong is doing.
Of your worthy name bethink you ; you should on Hartmut smile,
forgiveness showing.”

She answered : “ Dearest daughter, you do not ask aright :
I at the hands of Hartmut the greatest ills have met ;
He must atone in bondage for all his wrongful dealing.”
Then at the feet of Hilda Gu-drun fell down, with sixty
maidens, kneeling.

Then spake the lady Ortrun : “ In freedom let him live ;
To you will he be faithful, for this my word I give.
Be to my brother friendly, nor of your love be sparing ;
'T will be to you an honor if he again the kingly crown
be wearing.”

His friends all wept together that he in bondage sat,
Wearing chains so heavy ; their eyes with tears were wet :
Much they pitied Hartmut, no more his kingdom swaying.
On him and on his followers fetters fast and strongest
now were weighing.

Then spake to them Queen Hilda: "Leave your weeping now;
Their chains will I unloosen; they to my court may go;
But not to seek their freedom they their word must give me,
And with an oath must swear it, — not hence to ride unbidden,
nor to leave me."

Now the noble bondsmen were from chains set free.
Gu-drun then bade these warriors to bathe them in the sea;
Then, in finest clothing, men to court must lead them.
Knights were they most worthy; and so the more, good luck
did ever speed them.

There among the others Hartmut now was seen;
Never a braver warrior or better knight had been:
E'en now, amid his sorrows, such a mien was he wearing,
It seemed as if a pencil had drawn him there, and a parchment
him was bearing.

Now on him with kindness did all the ladies look,
While he, their friendship trusting, greater boldness took.
Ill-will, that erst was borne him, none were longer feeling;
It was by all forgotten what wounds they erst had been
to each other dealing.

Herwic now bethought him from the land of the Hegeling
How he might be going. He bade his men to bring
His clothing and his weapons, and on the horses load them:
When this was known to Hilda, to let them go no ready will
she showed them.

She said : " My good Lord Herwic, I beg you longer stay !
All your love and kindness a weight on me doth lay.
Not yet with my good wishes may you hence be riding ;
Before you yet shall leave me, there shall be high times
for the guests with me abiding."

To her Lord Herwic answered : " Lady, you know the way,
How those who send their kinsmen to lands which others sway
Again at home to see them are always greatly longing :
With pain our friends are waiting until again they see us
homeward thronging."

Then spake again Queen Hilda : " Grudge not, I beg, to me
One happiness and honor, for none can greater be ;
Herwic, king most worthy, the boon now deign to give me,
That I, poor lonely woman, may see my daughter crowned,
ere she shall leave me."

For this was he unwilling ; but still she begged and bade :
Thereby those held in bondage were soon from sorrow freed.
When now at last he told her that to do it he was willing,
Then the Lady Hilda was glad in heart, and rest of mind
was feeling.

Seats were made at her bidding, yet more and better still,
Which many knights with honor, near Hilda, soon did fill,
When came the high times merry, that now were widely bruited.
To crown Gu-drun, the fair one, King Herwic bade, for him
it now well suited.

Of those who him had followed there went away not one
Before at Matelan castle the high times were begun.
Then by Lady Hilda was clothing kindly given
To sixty maids or over : for praise and honor she had ever
striven.

To full a hundred women clothing good she gave :
None of those were slighted, but all her care did have,
Who from their homes were taken ; these had clothes the rarest.
The gifts indeed were wondrous that Hilda gave, of queens
the best and fairest.

Irold must guard the treasure ; to dwell in Hilda's home
That knight erelong was bidden, and quickly did he come :
Wâ-te, he of Sturm-land, must carve the meat at table ;
They also sent for Fru-te, to come to her as soon as he
was able.

Her cup-bearer she made him ; thereon thus spake the knight :
"That will I be most gladly, if now you think it right.
A fief you then will give me, with banners twelve to show it ;
Then am I lord in Denmark." Queen Hilda smiled, but never
thought to do it.

To Fru-te thus she answered : "That gift is not for thee ;
For still your nephew Horant Daneland's lord must be.
You, in his stead, for friendship, must now our cup be filling ;
And, while he is with the Normans, kindly to care for him
must you be willing."

The men and maids in waiting all to their tasks were set :
Silken clothes were called for ; a hoard both rich and great,
In rooms and chests long treasured, Queen Hilda bade them open.
These were brought by stewards, and all the guests to them
were freely holpen.

Of these the very lowest had clothing of the best.
If others than the Normans were bidden to the feast,
Or why they called them thither, I have no way of telling :
Full thirty thousand were they whom there they brought,
in Norman lands once dwelling.

Clothes for all were wanted, but where could these be found ?
If e'en the wealth of Araby any there had owned,
I ween he could no better or finer clothes have given
Than now they shared so freely : that this should be, Gu-drun
her best had striven.

Soon as this lovely maiden by the guests had now her seat,
She sent for her brother Ortwin, and did his coming wait,
That she the word might give him to be fair Ortrun's lover ;
She, King Ludwig's daughter, beside Gu-drun was seated then,
as ever.

Ortwin, lord of Ortland, made haste to his sister's bower :
Him welcomed many a maiden who sat with her that hour.
Then, from her seat arising, by the hand she kindly took him ;
And him aside then leading, at the further end of the hall
she thus bespoke him,

Saying : "Dearest brother, hear what for you is best ;
All that I shall tell you comes from a faithful breast.
If you for bliss are hoping, so long as you are living,
Then for Hartmut's sister you must, as best you may,
henceforth be striving."

To her young Ortwin answered : "Now think you this is well ?
I and her brother Hartmut never as friends can feel ;
We slew their father Ludwig, and, when to me she's wedded,
Of him will she be thinking ; then with her sighs I oft
shall be upbraided."

"You such love must show her that for him she will not long.
If now this word I give you, 't is from a love as strong
As I have had for any, or e'er in my life was feeling.
Should she to you be wedded, your bliss with her will
be beyond all telling."

Then said her knightly brother : "If she to you is known,
And now you think the Hegelings will her for a mistress own,
Gladly will I love her, — a maid of such high-breeding."
Him Gu-drun then answered : "You'll ne'er a sorry day with her
be leading."

Of this he spoke to others, but Hilda's word was nay ;
He told it unto Herwic, to hear what he would say,
Who held it right and worthy ; then to Fru-te speaking,
That friend would have him woo her, "for many knights will she
your own be making."

“Soothed should be the hatred that we each other bore ;
Of how it may be ended, I now will tell you more ;
Then,” said the Danish Fru-te, whose word was ever heeded,
“Hildeburg, the maiden, to young King Hartmut also
must be wedded.”

The wise and upright Herwic with faithful words thus spake :
“I deem it right and fitting the maiden him should take ;
When in the land of Hartmut she is queen and lady,
A thousand lordly castles to own her sway will there
be glad and ready.”

Then to the high-born Hildeburg Gu-drun the fair thus spake,
With words unheard by others: “Care for your weal I ’ll take ;
If I may well reward you, my friend and playmate dearest,
For all the love you ’ve shown me, soon in the Norman land
a crown thou wearest.”

To her then said fair Hildeburg: “For me it were not well
To give my troth to any who ne’er his love did tell,
Nor unto me, in fondness, e’er his heart was turning ;
Should we grow old together, I fear between us oft there ’ll be
heart-burning.”

Her Gu-drun thus answered: “Give not a thought to that :
I soon will send to Hartmut, and bid him answer straight
Whether he now would like it if from his pledge I free him,
As well as all his followers, and send him home, that his
friends again may see him.

“ If he his thanks shall tell me, I then in turn will bid
That he by deeds shall show it, and shall my wishes heed.
I then will freely ask him if he will wed a maiden,
That I and all my kinsmen may him with love and friendship
ever gladden.”

To her they brought young Hartmut, king of the Norman land,
And with him came old Fru-te. Near her, on either hand,
Proud Hildeburg and Ortrun within her bower were sitting ;
If the lady's word they heeded, their many woes they both
would be forgetting.

Hartmut, the son of Ludwig, went through the palace hall ;
To him a friendly greeting was given by one and all,
Alike both high and lowly from their seats arising.
None than he was braver ; no worth or greatness e'er in him
was missing.

He by Gu-drun, fair lady, to seat himself was told ;
And neither of the others her greeting did withhold.
Then said Queen Hilda's daughter : “ I beg you to be sitting
Near my faithful maidens, who washed with me for your knights,
as was befitting.”

“ This in scorn you bid me, fair and lovely queen !
Whatever wrong was done you truly gives me pain :
'T was by my mother's wishes that this from me was hidden ;
To keep it from my father, and from his knights as well,
were all men bidden.”

To him the maiden answered : “ My wish I may not hide :
I now, in truth, Sir Hartmut, must speak with you aside.
I and yourself, we only, may hear what I am saying.”
Hartmut then bethought him : “ May God now grant she is not
falsely playing.”

No one else but Fru-te allowed she to come near ;
Then the high-born maiden said in Hartmut's ear :
“ If you to me will hearken, and do what I shall tell you
With ready heart and freely, now of all your sorrows I will
heal you.”

“ Well I know your wisdom,” then young Hartmut said ;
“ Of aught that is unworthy I need not be afraid.
My heart for nothing wishes, unless to do your bidding :
Gladly, high-born lady, to all that you shall say will I
give heeding.”

She said : “ My wish I tell you, and now your life would cheer ;
I, and my kinsmen with me, will give you a helpmeet fair.
To keep both land and honor you may thus be seeking,
And of the hate we bore you none shall evermore a word
be speaking.”

“ Who is it, say, fair lady, that you for me will choose ?
Ere yet my love I give her, life would I rather lose
Than ever that my kinsmen her with scorn were eying ;
For me it were far better that I in death upon the field
were lying.”

“I will give your sister Ortrun, the maid beloved and fair,
To be a wife to my brother, himself to me most dear.
You must wed with Hildeburg, of a king the well-born daughter:
Never a dearer maiden you in the world could find,
where'er you sought her.”

“If this indeed may happen,” then young Hartmut said,
 “And now your brother Ortwin shall take that lovely maid,
 My dear-loved sister, Ortrun, and she to him is wedded,
 Then I will woo fair Hildeburg; thus hate will end, nor longer
 shall be dreaded.”

She said : “ To this I’ve brought him ; his troth to her he gave.
If now ’t would make you happy your father’s lands to have,
And again within his castles that you should soon be living,
You well may wed with Hildeburg, and there the queenly crown
to her be giving.”

He said : " That pledge I gladly, and on it give my hand ;
As soon as the king of Ortoland shall with my sister stand,
And both the crown have taken, then I, no more forbearing,
Will, with lovely Hildeburg, among our men our lands
and fiefs be sharing."

When he his word had plighted, then said the high-born maid :
 “ Now will I do gladly a further friendly deed ;
 Unto the lord of Karadie for a wife will I be giving
 The sister of King Herwic, that she with him may evermore
 be living.”

Within a ring of maidens Ortrun then they set,
And with her also Hildeburg, of birth both high and meet :
Ortwin then and Hartmut led them out to wed them.
“ I hope,” said Lady Hilda, “ that now, forever, we our friends
have made them.”

When to his side young Ortwin did the maiden Ortrun bring,
Lovingly and kindly, he took a golden ring,
And this upon the finger of her fair white hand he fitted.
Then far off were driven the many woes that late her life
had greeted.

Hartmut around fair Hildeburg then his arms did throw ;
Each on the hand of the other did a golden ring bestow.
The lovely maid was blameless, and sorrow gave him never ;
Of him and of fair Hildeburg nothing their faithful hearts
thro' life could sever.

Then said Queen Hilda's daughter : " Herwic, my lord most dear,
Say, does the land of your fathers lie to us so near
That men could bring your sister, if this by us were needed,
Here to my mother's kingdom, that she to the lord of Karadie
may now be wedded ? "

To her King Herwic answered : " This will I say to you :
Your men, if they will hasten, in twelve days' time can go ;
But if any to your kingdom the maiden would be leading,
Ill luck, I ween, awaits him, unless with him my own
good knights be speeding . "

Then answered Hilda's daughter : " Your help, I beg you, grant ;
By doing this, of happiness you nought shall ever want.
To your men both food and clothing my mother will be giving ;
Only bring us the maiden, that I may thank you, long as you
are living . "

To her then said Lord Herwic : “ How can she be clad ?
The mighty lord of Karadie a waste of my kingdom made ;
There he burned my castles, and of her clothes bereft her.”
Then said the king of Moorland : “ Her would I woo, if only
a smock were left her.”

To bring the maid then Herwic a hundred warriors sent ;
He bade his men to hasten when on their way they went.
He begged that Wâ-te and Fru-te would with them go riding :
This was to them a burden ; but yet the worthy knights both
did his bidding.

With greatest speed they hastened, both by day and night,
Until they found the maiden. Wâ-te they feared would fight, —
'Gainst this did Herwic's liegmen give their careful heeding.
Soon from her home the lady, with four and twenty maids,
the knights were leading.

By Wâ-te they were guided from the castle down to the sand :
Two ships they found, with row-boats, lying by the strand ;
One of these they seized on, and, helped by breezes blowing,
They fast away were sailing : throughout twelve days they
to their homes were going.

When to the land of the Hegelings they had brought the maid,
Many knights bethought them over the sand to speed,
To meet the lovely lady, and all with banners hasted.
They who had brought the maiden had kept their oaths, nor
from the task had rested.

How could any maiden a better welcome find ?
Gu-drun went forth to meet her, and gave her greeting kind ;
Hilda, with many ladies, to see the maiden hasted :
Nor came King Herwic's sister all alone, though with fire
her land was wasted.

She from home was followed by full three hundred men.
Now when the kingly Herwic his sister met again,
He, to show her honor, rode forward, proudly dashing ;
So did many others : loud were the shields of the knights
together clashing.

Four kings both rich and mighty rode to meet her there ;
Thereon the knights 'gan wrangle which of the ladies fair
Was loveliest and fairest. Long their time they wasted,
For all alike were worthy ; on this at last their wordy war
they rested.

The fair Gu-drun then kissed her and those who with her came.
They walked along the seashore, till a tent was seen by them,
With richest silken hangings ; while they stood thereunder,
What now to her should happen gave to Herwic's sister
greatest wonder.

Now the king of Karadie forthwith to come they bade ;
Then they asked the maiden : " Will you this man now wed ?
Kingdoms nine most mighty have for their master owned him."
With him were knights full many, yellow in hue, now standing
all around him.

His father and his mother were not of faith the same ;
But him, so light in color, one might a Christian name.
Like to gold, spun finely, the hair on his head was lying :
She would choose unwisely if she to him her love were now
denying.

She was slow her love to grant him, as oft one sees a maid ;
But she to him was given. The worthy knight then said :
“ So well I like this lady, from love I ne’er can free me.
Never will I leave her, and as her husband men erelong
shall see me.”

At last this knight and maiden each their troth did plight :
Both of them scarce waited till day should turn to night,
When, from others hidden, they should their bliss be owning.
Soon, ’mid knightly warriors, daughters of four rich kings
were hallowed for the crowning.





Tale the Thirty-First.

HOW THE FOUR KINGS WERE WEDDED IN HILDA'S LAND.

THEN the kings were hallowed, as in days of yore ;
Also there were knighted five hundred men or more.
Now in Hilda's kingdom the folk high times were having ;
It was at Matelan castle, before the walls where the sea
the sands was laving.

There the fair Queen Hilda to all fine clothing gave.
How, in the sight of ladies, rode Wâ-te old and brave !
How Irold, too, and Fru-te of Daneland, rode before them !
One heard the spear-shafts broken, as these they lowered,
and in the onset bore them.

Lightly the wind was blowing, but the dust was dark as night ;
Yet to the maidens' clothing the knights gave heeding slight,
Altho' 't was soiled and covered with the dust thick flying.
Before the ladies seated, riders bold in many a tilt
were vying.

Now at length the maidens were left no longer there ;
They, with the queenly Hilda, were led to a window near,
Where the daring champions their eyes on them were feeding :
Beside the four betrothed, a hundred well-clothed maids
they were thither leading.

Many wandering players there let their skill be shown ;
The best that each was able, how gladly was it done !
When early mass was ended, upon the next day's morning,
And God by them was worshiped, knights of the sword again
to their games were turning.

Of uproar and of gladness where could more be found ?
Of many tunes and singing the halls gave back the sound.
Until four days were over, there the high times lasted :
Well-born throngs were gathered, nor oft the hours
in idleness they wasted.

An open-handed giver, that day was Herwic seen.
He knew the wandering players, who there had come again,
Were bent on growing richer, and well for this were striving ;
Herwic meant, in kindness, that all, while there, should gain
an easy living.

First the lord of Sealand flung his gifts around
With willing hand so freely that thanks from all did sound
Who saw his love and kindness, or heard about it later :
In ruddy gold King Herwic the worth of full a thousand
pounds did scatter.

Clothing, too, was given by his friends as well as kin ;
Horses finely saddled many there did win,
Who before not often on such steeds had ridden.
When this was seen by Ortwin, in giving then he would not
be outbidden.

He, the king of Ortland finest clothes now gave :
Since then, if better clothing knights did ever have,
Forsooth we cannot tell you, — it never reached our hearing.
He and all his followers stood bereft, erelong, of much that
they were wearing.

No one now could reckon what store of clothing good
Was given by those from Moorland. There fine horses stood,
Soon to be given also, — such indeed is the saying :
Those who were to have them for better never hoped, nor e'er
were praying.

All were now made richer, both the young and old.
Then, too, was seen King Hartmut ; nought would he withhold,
As though his home and kingdom had not in war been wasted :
They saw him give so freely, that greater love and kindness
none e'er tasted.

By him and his friendly kinsmen who thither with him came,
And there were held in bondage, how readily by them
Was given what was left them, that any from them wanted !
By Hartmut and his followers all that could be asked
was gladly granted.

Gu-drun, the lovely maiden, a friendly will e'er bore
To Hildeburg of Ireland, with whom, in days of yore,
To wash upon the sea-sands the clothes she oft was bearing.
I ween no pains she slighted that Hartmut's love her friend
might now be sharing.

Gu-drun then bade her steward a hoard of goods to take
For those who shared her kindness. Men of this would speak,
And say in wealth to give them she would ne'er be wanting;
Heavy gold and silver, and clothes, could she to all
her friends be granting.

Before his seat upstanding, the Sturmisch lord was seen,
Clad so well and richly that never king nor his men
Finer clothes or better at any time were wearing.
None long time were waiting who hoped that day his kindness
to be sharing.

Above all others, Wâ-te gave such clothing there
That truly never better a king was seen to wear;
With gold and gems it sparkled, o'erhung with richest netting:
Such clothes with him he carried when on his way to court
he was forth setting.

In every one of the meshes lay a costly stone,
However one might name it; thereby it could be known
That in the land of Abalie the gems therein were fitted.
To Wâ-te and his followers all gave the hand, and them
with thanks they greeted.

None of those there gathered, who saw the clothes that day,
Could of the brave old Wâ-te this truth indeed gainsay, —
That beyond the gifts of princes his were far outreaching.
Of wealth he soon was master who for these gifts his hand
was now outstretching.

Willingly did Irold let them see his mind,
That he to none was grudging gifts of any kind.
Good care of Hilda's riches was Fru-te ever taking:
He was a faithful steward, and long of him thereafter
men were speaking.

The high times now were ended, and all their leave would take.
Then 't was allowed to Hartmut, as well his worth bespake,
His peace to gain forever; to this Gu-drun had brought him.
Then for their home they started; each happier went than he
had erst bethought him.

With friendly love, Queen Hilda bade them all farewell;
With her, Gu-drun and Hildeburg went, with kind goodwill,
Far beyond the castle, with all their maids-in-waiting.
There took they leave of Hartmut, when he at last was on
his way forth setting.

A guard Queen Hilda gave them across the land and sea;
Great was the host that Herwic and Ortwin now set free,
Whom, long held in bondage, they now were homeward sending;
Full a thousand followers Hartmut brought to his land
when the war was ending.

Everywhere the ladies one another kissed.
Many now were sundered who long each other missed,
And nevermore thereafter might again be meeting.
The high-bred Ortwin and Herwic went with them to the boats
that for them were waiting.

Irold must be their leader, while they did homeward fare.
Then by the king 't was bidden that he the word should bear
To Horant, lord of Denmark, how they the land were leaving:
Soon Irold to the warriors guidance and guard unto
their homes was giving.

The time, or late or early, in truth I cannot tell,
When they for their home in Kassian did at last set sail.
The folk, now faring thither, were nought but gladness showing;
After many sorrows, God on them was fullest bliss
bestowing.

Irold said to Horant, when he reached the Norman land,
That he by the king was bidden homeward to lead the band.
"To leave to them their kingdom," he answered, "it is fitting,
They home have come so gladly; I, too, to see my land
with pain am waiting."

Then they welcomed Hartmut, and to him his land did leave;
But how he swayed his kingdom I now no knowledge have.
With all his friends, then Horant quickly homeward hasted,
And left the land behind them; Denmark they reached,
nor many days they wasted.

There we now will leave them, and only this will say :
That never from a wedding homeward took their way
Happier knights and kinsmen than now from there were going :
Only the men of Karadie tarried still in the land,
their gladness showing.





Tale the Thirty-Second.

HOW THEY ALL WENT TO THEIR HOMES.

Now with the friendly Hegelings none would tarry more.
Soon on the way to Alzabie they Herwic's sister bore,
Shouting all for gladness that they the maid were bringing ;
While, on their watery pathway, with proud and happy hearts,
the knights were singing.

Queen Hilda gave, at parting, a kind farewell to them.
Tho' rich were Herwic's followers when first to her they came,
Yet gifts she gave full many to them, when homeward faring.
When one is seen so lavish, the name of a wonder-worker
is he rightly bearing.

Gu-drun then spake to her mother : " May blessings on you be !
Mourn not for the fallen ; by both my lord and me
Shall love to you be given : no more you need be feeling
Heaviness or sorrow ; your woes shall Herwic's kindness now
be healing."

To her Queen Hilda answered : “ Dearest daughter mine,
If you would make me happy, henceforth must friends of thine
Come to the land of the Hegeling thrice to see me yearly ;
Else must I greatly sorrow, and never can bear the loss
I feel so nearly.”

Then said Gu-drun, the high-born : “ Mother, it shall be done.”
At once, with smiles and weeping, and glances backward thrown,
She left the castle of Matelan, with many a friendly maiden.
Her sorrows now were ended : nought before did ever maids
so gladden.

Hither men brought horses, saddled and fitly bred,
To bear her hence with her maidens ; these their keepers led :
Light were all the breastplates, and golden-red each bridle.
I ween the ladies wished not longer far from home
to linger idle.

Many, with hair down-flowing, and decked with gold, rode there ;
Methinks from tears and sorrow none could then forbear,
Who must at last from Ortrun and from her maids be parted.
Should Ortrun be unhappy, Gu-drun would then be sad and
heavy-hearted.

Ortrun, betrothed to Ortwin, then her thanks did give
To fair Gu-drun, the queenly, that she had granted leave
To hold the Norman kingdom to Hartmut, her knightly brother :
“ Gu-drun, may God reward you ! my cares are gone, I ne’er
shall know another.”

To her mother Hilda, also, Ortrun her thanks did say,
That she in Ortland's kingdom the crown should wear one day,
Together with King Ortwin, and there be called his lady.
Then said to her Queen Hilda that she to grant her this was
ever ready.

Ortwin then and Herwic each to the other swore,
With strong and steady friendship, that they forevermore
Would sway with right and honor the lands to them belonging,
And ever would be earnest to seize and slay whoe'er
was either wronging.



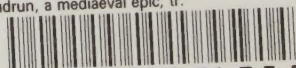
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